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'Should empower minds, not pockets'

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Calibrating a strategy for India's growth

Fiscal responsibility a key focus area

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DAZZLING DUO

Tanisha-Ashwini pair bags Super 100 title

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Key COP document calls for progress in adapting to climate change by 2030

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Fight for earth: Activists protest against continued use of fossil fuels at the COP-28 climate summit in Dubai on Sunday. AP

By 2025, all countries must have in place a detailed plan to adapt to the current and future impacts of climate change in their territory, and must demonstrate progress in implementing such a plan by 2030, the draft of a key climate document released on Sunday said. A final version is expected to be part of the agreement when the United Nation's COP-28 climate summit concludes in Dubai on Tuesday.

Much of the focus at the annual talks is on "mitigation", getting countries to commit to time-bound plans to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions, reflected in the emphasis on the Global Stocktake process. However, there is an equally important process under way on "adaptation". Global temperatures have already risen 1.1 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times and brought in their wake an acceleration in climate-related disasters, exhaustive scientific investigations show. "Adaptation" refers to the adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems that countries must make in response to these, and other anticipated climate effects.

These actions are country-specific and can range from building flood defences, setting up early warning systems for cyclones, switching to drought-resistant crops, to redesigning government policies, according to the UN climate division.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Vishnu Deo Sai chosen as new Chhattisgarh CM

Tribal leader and BJP veteran unanimously selected as the Legislature Party leader at a meeting in Raipur; new Cabinet to have two Deputy Chief Ministers; Raman Singh will be the Speaker

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

New role: Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and other BJP leaders congratulate Vishnu Deo Sai in Raipur on Sunday. ANI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Sunday chose Vishnu Deo Sai, a party veteran and former Union Minister, as the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. He will be the central Indian State's fourth Chief Minister, and the first tribal leader to hold the post. He is also the first to hail from a region beyond the Other Backward Class-dominated central plains in Chhattisgarh's 23-year-old history.

Mr. Sai, elected from Kunkuri, a reserved constituency in the hilly northern tribal belt of Sarguja from where the BJP won all 14 seats in the recent election, was unanimously chosen as the BJP's Legislature Party leader at a meeting held in the party headquarters at Raipur.

He later met Chhattisgarh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan as the Chief Minister-designate and was handed the letter appointing him Chief Minister. The swearing-in ceremony is likely to be held later this week.

In his first interaction with the media, Mr. Sai said his priority would be to fulfil the series of poll promises labelled "Modi *ki* Guarantee". Among others, he said 18 lakh homes would be built for the poor.

"I thank all the MLAs who have shown faith in me. I will work with complete honesty and try to live up to the expectations of everyone. As the CM of Chhattisgarh, I shall fulfil 'Modi's guarantees' given to the people by our party. In the last five years, 18 lakh people did not benefit from Awas Yojna [housing scheme] and my top priority will be to ensure all of them get it. All those who are corrupt will be punished. We won all the 14 Surguja seats because of Congress's failure and the Modi guarantees. Modi *ji*'s presence [in campaigning] made a huge difference."

The party also announced that there would be two Deputy Chief Ministers and three-time former Chief Minister Raman Singh will be the Speaker.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

NEARBY

HDK hints at fall of Cong. govt. after LS polls

SHIVAMOGGA
JD(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy has hinted at the possible collapse of the Congress government in the State after the Lok Sabha polls, claiming that a top Minister had already held talks with central BJP leaders. » PAGE 4

5,965 driving licences suspended

BENGALURU
Driving licences of 5,965 persons have been suspended by the Transport Department in the past three years for causing fatal road accidents across Karnataka. » PAGE 3

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 7

Government of Karnataka
Minorities Welfare,
Haj And Wakf Department
6 Months
A Tapestry Of Achievements
Free bus service for women across Karnataka
Gruha Jyothi
UPTO 200 UNITS FREE ELECTRICITY TO EACH HOME
Anna Bhagya
10kg
Gruha Lakshmi
₹2000
Yuva Nidhi
₹3000
₹1500
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Shri D.K. Shivakumar greets the Minister for Housing,Wakf and Minorities Welfare Department Shri B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan.
Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
DELIVERED AS PROMISED...
Directorate of Minorities
Doubling of numerical strength:- From the year 2023-24, student enrollments in 50 Morarji desai residential schools have been doubled. Due to this, additional 2196 students have received admissions in these schools.
Integrated Schools:- From the year 2023-24, 62 Minority Morarji desai Residential Schools in the state have been upgraded to Integrated Schools from Class 6 to Class 12 and Science & Commerce Departments have been started in Pre-University Colleges and an additional 1191 students have been admitted in these schools.
Sanctioning of Posts:- The posts of Group – B category Principals have been upgraded to the post of Group - A category Principals in the upgraded 62 Residential Schools. 908 teaching / non-teaching posts have been created in doubled & upgraded schools.
Development of Jain & Sikh Pilgrimage:- A grant of 30 crores has been earmarked for subsidies of Jain and Sikh Pilgrimage and 9.25 crores has been already released for the comprehensive development of Shravanabelagola Shrine.
Skill Training:- From the current year, training has already been started for educated unemployed young men /women under the Skill development of minorities scheme. And steps are being taken to provide military training, technical & non-technical training.
I.A.S/K.A.S Training:- IAS and KAS pre examination training for 400 minority students is being given at Haj Bhavan. I.A.S and K.A.S training along with graduation is being given for 60 students through combined course.
Karnataka State Wakf Board
Preservation of Wakf Assets Scheme:- A grant of Rs.28.34 crores has been released for the preservation of wakf properties of wakf institutions.
Honorarium scheme for Pesh Imams and Maujans: A total grant of Rs.55.00 crores has been sanctioned to Pesh Imam and Maujans working in the mosques registered with the Board, and a total grant of Rs.36.67 crore has been released for 7593 Pesh Imams and 7569 Maujans.
Tastik and Annuity fund:- A grant of Rs.3.28 crores has been released to pay Tastik-annuity pension compensation to a total of 868 non-Hindu institutions.
Under Case-52 and Case-54:- 21 cases under Case-52 and 419 cases under Case-54 were disposed of in Karnataka State Wakf Board.
Karnataka State Haj Committee
About 7138 pilgrims have traveled for Hajj pilgrimage under Hajj- 2023 from Karnataka state. Around 6146 pilgrims have traveled for Haj from Bangalore embarkation (including pilgrims from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and other states).
Karnataka State Wakf Council
During the year 2023-24 under Wakf properties / Institutions Development Scheme, a total of Rs. 22.99 lakhs were spent as loan for construction of Shadimahal / Commercial Complex / Hostel building and for other expenses and Rs. 118.97 lakhs has been recovered.
Karnataka State Wakf Women's Development Foundation
In the year 2023-24, a total of Rs. 197.42 lakhs has been spent towards providing health care to 360 Muslim women and girls and other related expenses.
Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation
Digital Loan Repayment System:- Karnataka Minority Development Corporation has launched a digital payment gateway to recover its debts from the public.
Arivu Education Loan Scheme:- An amount of Rs.1000.00 lakhs has been given to the Karnataka Examinations Authority as Corpus Fund for providing loans to students pursuing Professional courses.
Foreign Education Loan Scheme:- A loan of up to Rs.20.00 lakh is being provided to students from minority communities who want to study abroad, to facilitate their graduation and post-graduate studies in prestigious foreign universities.
Special Shramashakthi Scheme for Women:- A loan and subsidy amounting to Rs.0.50 Lakh is provided by the corporation for financial empowerment of Widow, unmarried, divorced women from minority community.
Santhwana Scheme:- In cases of communal riots and communal violence in the state and in case business centers and residential houses are destroyed or damaged due to environmental calamities, a scheme has been launched by the Corporation to provide loan/subsidy upto Rs.5.00 Lakh for such cases.
Interest Subsidy Scheme:- For the first time, 6% interest subsidy is being given on loans up to Rs 10 crore, to entrepreneurs belonging to the minority community, through the Karnataka State Financial Corporation.
As enshrined in our Constitution, - to safeguard public property and to abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India
Shri Manoz Jain I.A.S
Secretary, Minoritiy Welfare, Haj and Wakf Department
Shri Mohammad Nazeer
Managing Director, Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation
Shri Jeelani. H. Mokashi
Director, Directorate of Minorities
A BG-BGE

Innovative TPL bringing the sport into the limelight in the country

The quicker 20-point format, charcoal grey court, mobile app, merchandise, and involvement of Bollywood stars are some of the initiatives seen in the league

THE GIST

- The players got an average of about ₹five lakh each this season, as compared to about ₹1.5 lakh in 2019 in the second edition
- TPL has already organised more than 30 grassroot-level tournaments in Mumbai alone

Kamesh Srinivasan

The Tennis Premier League (TPL) has a few prominent international players, men and women, playing along with the cream of Indian talent like Sumit Nagal and Rutuja Bhosale, on a fast-paced 20-point format, for pure entertainment. However, at its heart, the focus of TPL is the healthy growth of Indian tennis.

A vibrant product for television, as Sony Sports gets ready to broadcast the event for the second year from December 12 to 17, there is a certain aura about the league that is triggering positive vibes for the game.

There is real money for the players. The best Indian player with two Challenger singles titles this season, Nagal gets ₹18.5 lakh, as he strengthens Gujarat Panthers, along with Karman Kaur Thandi who pockets ₹8.5 lakh.

Quite significantly, the players get an average of about ₹five lakh each this season, as compared to about ₹1.5 lakh in 2019 in the second edition.

"We are extremely happy, positive and hopeful with the way things have shaped up, considering the growth of the league each year," said Kunal Thakkur, the young founder of TPL.

Like the way the Laver Cup turned to black to be unique in its second edition in 2017, as compared to the blue of the Australian and US Open, the red clay of Roland Garros, and the green grass of Wimbledon, the TPL will have a charcoal grey tennis court at the Balewadi Stadium in Pune this year.

Landmark season

"We will have the charcoal grey tennis court for the first time in India. We wanted the fifth edition to be a landmark season for us and wanted to make it look very different. Like the unique format we have, it will be a unique colour that we hope will be attractive and novel on television.

"The colour of the ball remains the same and we feel that the ball will be nicely visible. It is indeed a task to paint the courts and again resurface it to original colour for regular use later. Yet, we feel that it would be worth the effort," said Kunal.

It is not just the appearance that matters for TPL. It has a mobile app that is trying to engage all the tennis aspirants across the country and bring them on one platform to help healthily propel the game. It is expected to grow to be the one-stop shop for all tennis needs.

"The response to the app has been fantastic. With the support of AITA and the State Association in Maharashtra, we plan to host many grassroots-level tournaments in the country. We have already organised more than 30 tournaments in Mumbai alone. The players and coaches are extremely happy with the way things are moving. The main focus of the app is to get the entire tennis community together on one single platform. It is a unified effort to provide the players all the support and facilities that they need to turn professionals", explained Mrunal Jain, the co-founder of TPL.

With the players' welfare as the key, the TPL has already made a difference in the careers of some of India's leading players.

"The league was started to promote tennis, encourage, motivate and help the Indian players. We are glad to share that one of our team owners, Punit Balan, has signed long-term agreements with Ankita Raina, Rutuja Bhosale and Arjun Khade. This year we have also extended support to our No.1 singles player, Sumit Nagal. TPL is also ensuring a higher amount each passing year for the players who are participating in the league. The more we promote the players, it will catapult the growth of tennis in the country," felt Kunal.

The league will be on a larger scale this year with massive promotions.

"Top-ranked players are participating, and well-known celebrities have joined hands with TPL. The ultimate goal for Mrunal and I is to get the top players around the world to come and participate in this league. It is a dream to get the likes of Roger Feder, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic to play in this event," said Kunal.

More excitement, less exertion

Even as the atmosphere becomes electrifying with the quick format, the exertion is much less for the professionals at the end of the season, owing to the 20-point format for each rubber.

"The response to the 20-point format has been fantastic. The players were a little sceptical in the first season, but they all love the format. Many academies have started organising tournaments in the same format. We feel that it is the perfect format for television as it becomes difficult to hold the attention of the audience for long nowadays. As every point matters, the match becomes very exciting, keeping the viewers glued to their screens. The audience at the venue has a great time, as even a layman who does not follow tennis can very easily understand the scoring system," observed Kunal.

It is not just the black court, the 20-point format, or the presence of leading players that draws the attention of the fans. The presence and involvement of Bollywood stars Taapsee Pannu, Rakul Preet Singh, Sonali Bendre, Malaika Arora, Arjun Kapoor, and Sonu Sood apart from global tennis stars Leander Paes and Sania Mirza, considerably enhances the value of the whole venture.

> Mrunal and I had a dream to create a tennis league on par with the IPL. It sounded impossible when we talked about it in 2018. It had also looked difficult to sustain a tennis league and grow it each year. We have been able to achieve that
>
> **KUNAL THAKKUR**
> TPL founder

"Cricket and Bollywood have the maximum reach in our country. So, if we have to make tennis popular and take it to the masses, there is nothing better than getting the support of Bollywood stars. The stars have added to the reach and awareness of the league. We are very fortunate that these celebrities have come forward and extended their unconditional support to the league and tennis. Thankfully, many prominent personalities are willing to support and promote various sports other than cricket," said Kunal.

More than anything, the celebrities are keen that tennis gets its due as it is a great game.What matters eventually is the vibrant atmosphere at the stadium with the presence of fans in strength.

Expecting packed stadium

"We are expecting a packed stadium this year. As we have the support of all our affiliated academies, we have invited all of them and are providing transport, to come and witness the league with their students, friends and family. Any person who is passionate about tennis can just download the TPL app and claim a free season pass for the event," revealed Kunal.

There is also an excellent way to connect with the fans through merchandise.

"Yes, plans are underway to create a complete line of TPL merchandise which will be available on our App. These will also be given to the players and academies who are performing well on the App," said Kunal.

Driven by interest

It is a genuine interest in the growth of tennis that drives the league and all the associated efforts.

The most glamorous Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket is the permanent role model for every aspiring league. Tennis is no exception.

"Mrunal and I had a dream to create a tennis league on par with the IPL. It sounded impossible when we talked about it in 2018. It had also looked difficult to sustain a tennis league and grow it each year. We have been able to achieve that.

A struggle each season

"It has been a struggle each season. We have faced several difficulties, but each challenge has taught us how to deal with different issues. The difficulties have been successfully tackled. We are now hoping that with the love, support and blessings of the tennis fraternity, we will be able to achieve our dream of taking tennis to every home," said Kunal.

Tennis Premier League for sure adds considerable value to the game in the country.

Schools worried that age criteria under NEP may affect admissions

There is confusion among parents as well as school managements as to whether to admit children who have not completed the required age specification for class I for 2024-25

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Schools across Bengaluru are worried that the age criteria for kindergarten and class I as mandated by the National Education Policy (NEP) will affect their admission numbers in the upcoming academic year.

There is also confusion among parents as well as school managements as to whether to admit students who have not completed the required age specification for class I for 2024-25.

As per the NEP, students getting admitted to class I should have completed six years before June 1, from the academic year of 2025–26. FILE PHOTO

What NEP says

As per the NEP, the students getting admitted to LKG and UKG should have completed four and five years respectively before the commencement of the academic year on June 1 (in 2025-26).

Similarly, it says that students getting admitted to class I should have completed six years before June 1, from the academic year of 2025-26.

"To abide by the NEP, we are not accepting children who do not fulfill the age criteria for KG classes and class 1 from this year itself. We are worried that this might upset parents and the admission numbers might drop this year as they might go and check at other schools if they are offering admissions without this age bar. However, most schools have now started following the same rules for admissions and we are crossing our fingers that the parents realise this," said Selvaraj, principal, ACTS Secondary School, Electronics City.

While most schools are very strict with the rules when it comes to KG classes, some have been flexible with admissions for class 1 this year.

"If a child wants to get admitted for class 1 after 2025-26, then we will not accept them if they are not six years old. But this year, the schools have been asked to take a call. So, we have decided to take students who are five years and 10 months or five years and 11 months old for 2024-25. Although our admission process will only take place in March," said Sunil Fernandes S.J., principal, St. Joseph's Boys High School.

He added that with Karnataka having the unique student achievement tracking system (SATS) portal, it is important for schools to follow the age criteria as the system will otherwise reject the child's profile.

An excuse for some

A principal from a school in the central business district (CBD) remarked that while some schools are trying to abide by the rules, others are using this as an excuse to be more exclusive with their admissions.

"With parents running behind popular schools, the schools are using this policy to their advantage," they said.

For the last couple of years, parents have been protesting against these new rules which have created confusion about admissions with many being forced to repeat classes.

"We considered going to court and even hired a lawyer. But when the new government was elected, they promised a State Education Policy and we dropped our legal pursuit as we expected some relief from all this. Now, without a choice, I am making my daughter repeat LKG in 2024-25," said Niveditha C.P., a resident of Shastri Nagar.

Convincing parents

Some schools reported that despite strong protests from parents, they were able to convince them and retain admissions.

"The parents ask us why we did not have this rule when they got their first child admitted. We are taking our time and convincing them to admit their students in pre-nursery instead of KG if their child is below the age limit," said B.S. Venkatachala, principal, Narayana School, Vidyaranyapura. He also said that there was an increase of 20 - 25% in overall admissions this year.

Finally, BBMP calls for tender to build fire safety exit in Annexure 3 building

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has called for a short-term tender for constructing a fire escape staircase in the Annexure 3 building of its head office in the city. This is a key step towards securing No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Fire and Emergency Services Department.

The six-floor building that was constructed in 2010, which also housed the COVID-19 war room, does not have a building plan, besides fire safety measures. For the last 13 years, the building has been functioning without fire exit staircase.

The building houses 20 to 25 departments. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The building houses about 20-25 departments, including health, education, and road infrastructure. The building plan is mandatory for construction of any building, and the same has to be approved by the Town Planning Department of the BBMP.

The Hindu had reported about this on September 1. After the report, BBMP chief engineer B.S. Prahlad had ordered fire safety audit of buildings maintained by Multipurpose Engineering Department. However, the audit report has not yet been made public. In August this year, a fire broke out in Quality Control Department Laboratory in the office killing one and injuring eight. A report on the cause of incident pointed at error in testing method.

About three-and-a-half months later, the BBMP has now invited short-term tender to build a staircase along with signboards, fire exit doors, air circulator, and other necessary fire safety measures. The lowest bidder will be awarded the work. The last date to submit quotation is December 12 and quotation will be opened on December 13. The officer said apart from the staircase, the BBMP has already installed other measures like fire extinguishers.

Smoke, odour bother residents as crematorium chimney remains broken

A view of the Harshchandra Ghat electric crematorium.

Meghnavi Ravuri
BENGALURU

A portion of the chimney of the electric crematorium at Harishchandra Ghat that was installed about a decade ago has broken, leading to residents around the crematorium having to live with the smoke and the odour.

Although the premises of the crematorium is undergoing renovation, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) appears to be in no mood to replace the chimney. With the length of the pipe now reduced to 50 ft. from 100 ft., a few residents living in the vicinity are bearing the brunt.

According to a worker, the chimney broke and fell off about a year ago and multiple pleas by the workers to fix it were ignored by the civic body.

The pipe broke in the middle and with the reduced height, smoke that billows envelopes the vicinity every time a body is burnt.

The worker said the steel chimney broke owing to corrosion as it was old. "Now, we are operating with the 50 ft. chimney," he added.

Umakanth N., who runs a shop near the crematorium, said although he has been living in the neighbourhood for the past 50 years, occasionally he is also inconvenienced after the chimney broke. The smoke accompanied by the foul smell is sometimes unbearable, he said. He also pointed out that the loud noise of bands used during the procession of mortal remains is also a major concern among residents.

A resident, Shylaja K.S., who grew up in the area, said many informed the local authorities about the problem but it was not attended to.

A BBMP official from the Health Department said there is a proposal to replace the chimney which is old and soon the civic body will release funds to erect a new one.

Woman falls to death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 32-year-old homemaker died after she slipped from the fifth floor of her apartment at Doddabanahalli in Kadugodi recently. The deceased has been identified as Khushbu Trivedi.

The police said that she was married to Ashish Kumar in 2017. She was cleaning the balcony of the apartment when she lost balance, slipped, and fell to the ground.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, DEC. 11		
RISE	06:31	SET 17:54
RISE	04:44	SET 16:24
TUESDAY, DEC. 12		
RISE	06:32	SET 17:55
RISE	05:43	SET 17:17
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13		
RISE	06:32	SET 17:55
RISE	06:44	SET 18:16

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	23
Mysuru	30	23
Bengaluru	29	20

Bengaluru Today
28°C Morning will be pleasant. The weather will be comfortable but humid. Short spell of light rain and thundershower is a chance.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slight warm and humid. Night also will be pleasant.

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READER'S MAIL

Parking problem

Sir, – The space available at the parking enclosure at the National College metro station is limited after the traffic police barred free parking on the vacant New High School Road that runs parallel to K.R. Road. In the morning rush hour, motorists are often seen cramming their vehicles into every available space. The parking bay is presently laid out only on one side of the station. There is a lot of space next to the station building on the other side, alongside the expansive National College playground, where additional parking could easily be created. Commuters using the Gate C to access the metro will benefit greatly from this as they will not have to take a long detour to the other side to park their vehicle.

Kamal Laddha,
Bengaluru

Death of Arjuna

Sir, – Karnataka plunged into deep shock on hearing the abrupt demise of Arjuna. It's unfortunate that SoPs were ignored by forest officials.
An official directive not to use the services of elephants aged above 60 also seems to have been ignored.
The government should hold a thorough inquiry and punish the guilty. It should also recruit efficient forest officers and veterinary doctors.

M.A. Madhusudan,
Bengaluru

Readers can write to letters.bangalore@thehindu.co.in

Crowds throng Bull Temple Road on the eve of Kadalekayi Parishe opening

A stretch of Bull Temple Road was teeming with people on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Surabhi Gorebal
BENGALURU

The three-day Kadalekayi Parishe (groundnut fair), which will officially begin on Monday, drew thousands of people on Sunday to the Bull Temple Road. Amidst the festive-like atmosphere, traffic and crowd management turned chaotic, especially around the evening.

Even though the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) had issued traffic diversions and had three dedicated parking spaces for those who came to the fair, many complained that the space was not sufficient for all the visitors. As the day progressed, the roads around the central venue was clogged with traffic.

Veeresh Acharya, an attendee, said, "The traffic is tolerable for people visiting from other places as it takes place once in a year, but it creates an issue for the local residents as their daily routes are altered."

"We have deployed enough policemen to handle the situation. We have also assigned two college grounds for parking facilities. Yet, since 5 to 6 lakh people arrive here for the parishe, it often gets difficult to accommodate so many vehicles," said Shivaprakash Devaraju, DCP (Traffic), South Division.

Ahead of the inauguration of the fair, many visitors went to the parishe on the weekend to escape the crowd which is expected to double in the next two days. "I have been going to the parishe for almost two decades now. It seems like the crowd keeps getting bigger and bigger every year. It will be impossible to shop for groundnuts tomorrow without getting stamped or pushed. Hence I am here today," said Bhavana. H., a resident of Hanumanthanagar.

Minister of Transport and Muzrai Ramalinga Reddy also paid a visit for an inspection of the preparations. "As I have to be in Belagavi for the legislative session, I inspected the arrangements today (Sunday) and also offered prayers at the temple," he told *The Hindu*.

The Muzrai Department has also given a call to citizens to bring their own bags to the fair to avoid the usage of plastic under the "Parishege banni, kai cheela thanni" (come to parishe, bring your handbag) campaign.

'Govt. will make efforts to secure stolen idols'

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Minister for Tourism H.K. Patil said here on Sunday that the government would make a serious attempt to recover stolen idols and artefacts of the State that have been smuggled out and are in different parts of the world.

He was speaking after releasing the new logo and tagline for Mysuru to promote the city as an international tourism destination for all seasons.

The Minister said it was brought to his notice that as many as 72 sculptures and idols some more beautiful than what is preserved in the existing temples, have been stolen over the years and are on display in museums in England. "I will discuss the issue with the Department of Archaeology Museums and Heritage and take necessary steps in a bid to recover them," said the Minister.

Mr. Patil said he was not aware of the kind of efforts that have been put into this endeavour in the past but this government would take up the issue seriously.

THE HINDU
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Man gets new SIM card, loses ₹1.6 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Getting a new SIM card proved costly for a city-based professor as he lost ₹1.6 lakh to cyber fraud.

The victim said that he had noticed that his SIM was deactivated and went to the service centre to get it checked on November 17.

The service centre executives told him that the SIM card had scratches and gave him a new SIM. Soon after the new SIM was installed, ₹1.6 lakh from his credit card and ₹3,100 from his debit card was transacted.

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THE HINDU businessline.
FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR Young World THE HINDU

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G2C
E-Tender Notice No: 07 MYS 2023-24
Dated: 28-11-2023
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Item of work	Approx. Value
1	450 CFM Diesel driven rotary screw type air compressor with Air Drier. (Tender No. L9236120A)	Rs. 26,62,000/-
2	Spare power pack suitable for HOLMATRO make for HRD's. (Tender No. L9236236A)	Rs. 33,52,000/-

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 10:30 Hrs. on 26-12-2023
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Senior Divisional Materials Manager
PUB/542/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24 Mysuru
South Western Railway - SWR | @SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the General Public that my Client **Mrs. SHABREEN TAJ,** Wife of Mr. Mohammed Arif, Residing at No.251, 12th Cross, Rashad Nagar, Govindapura Main Road, Arabic Collage Post, Bangalore, Bangalore-560 045. AADHAAR : 2291 7386 9740, Propose to PURCHASE below mentioned Schedule property from Present Property Owner **Mrs. SURAIYA FAROOQ,** Wife of Mr. Farooq Pasha, Residing at No.1. N.S. House, V.B. Layout, K.R. Puram, Bangalore-560 036. AADHAAR : 5087 0619 2636. She is the absolute Owner of this below mentioned Property.
(1) Present Property Owner **Mrs. SURAIYA FAROOQ,** has lost the Connected Original Registered Sale Deed, Vide Registered Document No.8880/1980-81, Book No-I, Volume No.3312, Pages:94 to 97, dated:23/10/1980, and Link Documents. The General Public are hereby informed that nobody shall deal with the said Document and if any person/s are in custody of the same, they are hereby called upon to hand over the same to the under signed immediately.
(2) Today my Client **Mrs. SHABREEN TAJ,** Propose to PURCHASE below mentioned Schedule property from Present Property Owner Mrs. SURAIYA FAROOQ, she is the absolute Owner of this below mentioned Property she is the owner Acquired the rights, title of the schedule Property. If any Persons have any kind of objecting over Schedule Property for purchase may lodge their objections with the undersigned along with supporting documents within **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice failing which my clients shall presume that there are no objection and proceed with the sale Agreement / Sale deed transaction.
SCHEDULE :
ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL of the Immovable Residential Property i.e., ACC Sheet Roofed Ground Floor House Constructed on the Site No.36/1, formed out of Assessment No.27/5, Khata No.964, New BBMP Khata No.27/5/36/964, Situated at **11th Cross, "UMAR NAGAR" "NAGAWARA VILLAGE, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore**, Presently coming under the Jurisdiction of the Bruhath Bangalore Mahanagara Palike, BBMP Ward No.23, Bangalore, BOUNDED ON THE: **EAST by :** Private Property, **WEST by :** 20 Feet Road, **NORTH by:** Private Property, (Smt. Fathima Bee's Property), **SOUTH by:** Private Property, (Mr. Abdul Hameed's Property).MEASURING :- EAST to WEST : 40'-0" Feet, and NORTH to SOUTH : 30'-0" Feet, In all Totally Measuring : 1200 Square Feet. The SCHEDULE PROPERTY is Residential ACC Roofed House.
ROSHAN ZAMEER. BA,LL.B.
ADVOCATE
NOOR CHAND ASSOCIATES,
Office No. 02 & 03, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Main Road,Beside Savi Sagar Hotel, Govindapura, Arabic College Post, Bangalore-45. Cell. 9886831826 / Client :9980033315.

How fractals offer a new way to see the quantum realm

Uncertainty is an inherent feature of all systems. It is independent of the precision or the accuracy with which the system is measured. It just is there, as an implicit element of the system's existence. And it has forced physicists to find a practical approach to study quantum systems in ways that can circumvent the limitations it imposes

Qudsia Gani

Quantum physics is too weird for many people to understand, and part of the weirdness is due to some of its counter-intuitive features. For example, many quantum phenomena are bound by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, so it is impossible to know them with great certainty. According to this principle, we can't obtain the information about a particle's position, say, until we actively check for it.

This is unlike that of, say, a football that has been kicked: we can calculate its position based on the information that we get from Newton's laws. In other words, gaining information about a particle means collapsing its wavefunction. The wavefunction is a mathematical object that contains information about the particle, and 'collapsing' it means forcibly modifying it in a way that yields that information.

Before we obtain the information about a particle's location, however, it can be said to be in more than one place, and possibly in 'contact' with other particles even if they are physically quite far away.

What are fractal dimensions?

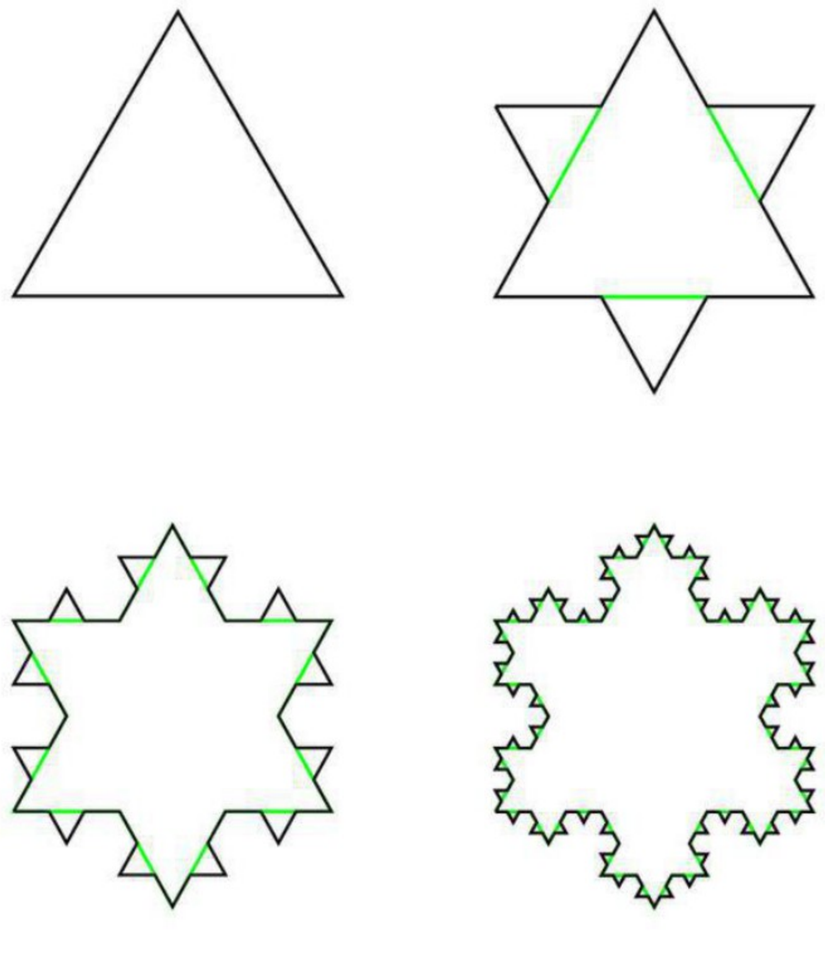
Uncertainty is an inherent feature of all systems. It is independent of the precision or the accuracy with which the system is measured. It just is there, as an implicit element of the system's existence. And it has forced physicists to find a practical approach to study quantum systems in ways that can circumvent the limitations it imposes.

One of the ways in which physicists have responded is via the so-called non-integer small dimensions, a.k.a. fractal dimensions. The dimensionality of a quantum system is an important thing to bear in mind when physicists study its properties. For instance, electrons in a one-dimensional system form a Luttinger liquid (not a liquid *per se* but a model that describes the electrons' liquid-like behaviour); in a two-dimensional system, the particles exhibit the Hall effect (the conductor develops a side-to-side voltage in the presence of a top-to-bottom electric field and a perpendicular magnetic field).

The question obviously arises: How would a quantum system behave in non-integer or fractal dimensions?

Physicists use the fractal geometry approach to study quantum systems in dimensions like 1.55 or 1.58, or in fact anything between one and two dimensions.

Fractality is ubiquitous in nature, if also sometimes hidden from plain sight. A



The first four steps to building a Koch snowflake. WXS (CC BY-SA 3.0)

shape is fractal if it exhibits self-similarity, i.e. if parts of it at a smaller scale resemble parts at a larger scale. Such shapes can be easily produced by repeatedly modifying its edges using simple rules. Consider the Koch snowflake – a shape that begins as an equilateral triangle, and in each subsequent step, every side becomes the base for a new triangle. After many steps, a fractal snowflake appears.

The higher the 'value' of a fractal's dimension, the greater is its ability to fill space as its shape evolves. For example, the Koch snowflake has a fractal dimension of around 1.26.

What do fractals look like?

On the macroscopic scale, fractals can be seen as irregular, complex patterns at all scales and in all views, near or far. Some of the more remarkable examples of such patterns include the design of human fingerprints, the stumps of trees, in the shells of snails, the system of human

Many quantum phenomena are bound by Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, so it is impossible to know them with great certainty. According to this principle, we cannot obtain information about a particle's position, until we actively check for it

veins, the network of rivers as seen from high up, the splitting of veins in a plant leaf, the edges of a snowflake, a bolt of lightning going branching off in different directions, the shapes of clouds, the mixing of liquids of different viscosity, the way tumours grow in the body, and so on.

There are fractals in the quantum realm as well. In a study published in 2019, for example, researchers from Switzerland and the U.S. used X-rays to study the magnetic properties of a compound called neodymium nickel oxide. They erased its magnetic order (the parts of its internal order imposed by magnetic fields) and then restored it. To their surprise, they found that parts of the material's insides where the magnetisation was in the same direction – called magnetic domains – had a fractal arrangement. They also found that the domains reappeared in almost the same positions they were in before they were erased, as if the material had a memory. All these effects were due to the material's quantum physical properties.

Another example of fractal behaviour at the microscopic scale is available in graphene – a single-atom thick sheet of carbon atoms linked to each other. In this setting, the surface density pattern of electrons has an almost fractal distribution.

Applications of fractality

Historically, the first attempt to apply fractal analysis in physics was for Brownian motion – the rapid, random, zigzagging motion of small particles suspended in a liquid medium, like pollen in water. As such, the value of fractals is that they describe a new kind of order in systems that we may have otherwise overlooked.

They pave the way to potential new insights from otherwise familiar shapes like lines, planes, and points, in the unfamiliar milieu of a space with non-integer dimensions.

Researchers have also used the concept of fractality in data compression, such as to reduce the size of an image when storing it, and to design more compact antennae without compromising their performance. Some have also used fractality to study patterns in galaxies and planets and, in cell biology, to make sense of some bacteria cultures. Fractal geometry has also found applications in chromatography and ion-exchange processes, among others.

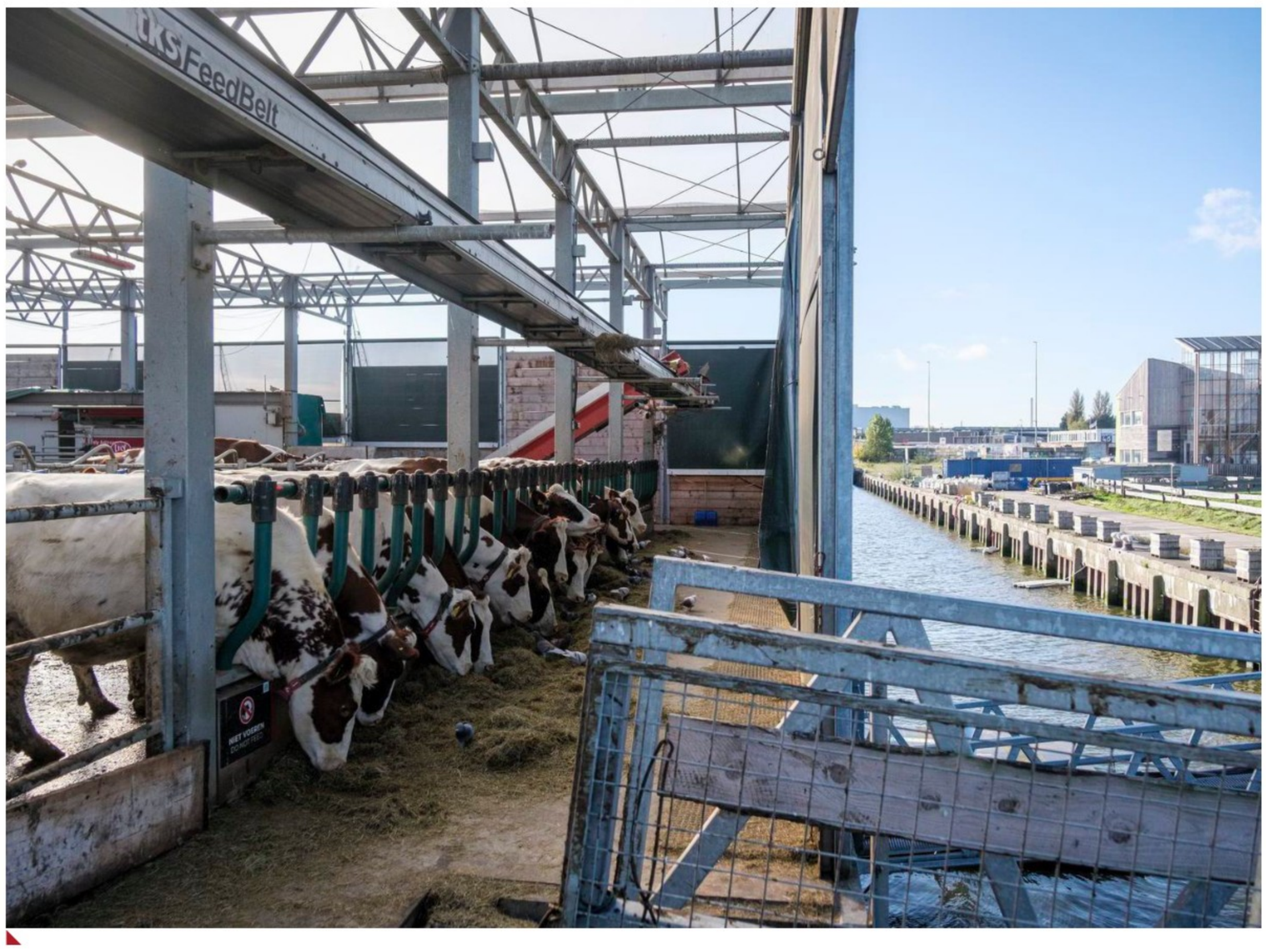
Fractals are rooted in geometry but – like the fractal growth of branches on trees – they have far-reaching implications, more so as they interact with different natural processes in a variety of settings. There are self-similar structures around us that become increasingly complex with time. You just need to slow down and look closer, and you might just glean some information that brings some quantum mystery into focus.

Qudsia Gani is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics, Government College for Women, Srinagar.

THE GIST

- Physicists use the fractal geometry approach to study quantum systems in dimensions like 1.55 or 1.58, or in fact anything between one and two dimensions
- On the macroscopic scale, fractals can be seen as irregular, complex patterns at all scales and in all views, near or far. Some remarkable examples include human fingerprints, stumps of trees, human veins, river networks as seen from above, veins in a plant leaf, the edges of a snowflake, and so on
- The value of fractals is that they describe a new kind of order in systems that we may have overlooked. They pave the way to potential new insights from otherwise familiar shapes like lines, planes, and points, in the unfamiliar milieu of a space with non-integer dimensions

BIG SHOT



Cows eat at the Floating Farm in Rotterdam, Netherlands. The farm's owners say extreme weather spurred by climate change — heavy rainfall and flooding of cities and farmland — makes the farm's approach climate-adaptive. AP

WHAT IS IT?

Pinna nobilis: Comeback hero

Reuters

A huge clam that was on the verge of extinction has made a comeback, with a surge in numbers in waters off Croatia, marine biologists say. The clam, known as the noble pen shell or pinna nobilis, started dying out as a deadly pathogen spread in parts of the Mediterranean around 2016. Numbers plummeted across the region and, until recently, scientists in Croatia only knew of around 10 surviving in their corner of the Adriatic.

Last year, a diver spotted a group of 20 near the shore in the north of the Istria peninsula. "The news sounded incredible. It was impossible they were alive," said Sandro Dujmovic of the Natura Histrica organisation, which manages Istria's protected areas.

This year biologists managed to collect about 100 young specimens and take them to an aquarium. "It was a sign that they are still reproducing themselves," Dujmovic told Reuters.

The clams, whose shells can grow as much as 1.2 m across, play an important ecological role by filtering sea water and allowing other organisms to flourish. In the aquarium in the Adriatic town of Pula, they are kept in specially filtered water, clear of the parasites that can attack them.

A live Pinna nobilis seashell is seen in Vrsar harbor, Croatia, on Thursday. REUTERS

The scientists said it was too early to say what had caused the comeback, but Croatia's government was funding more research.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to
science@thehindu.co.in
with the subject 'Daily page'

Four students killed in accident near Chickballapur

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Four students of a private college were killed when their car lost control and fell into a ditch near the highway underpass on the outskirts of Chickballapur on Saturday.

The deceased have been identified as Pawan, 22, Vasanth, 21, Aryan, 22, and Tyagore, 21. The victims were on their way to Pawan's grandmother's house.

Pawan was said to be driving, and they had almost reached their destination, when he lost control of the vehicle, and fell into the ditch adjacent to Amani lake. An ambulance driver passing by noticed the accident and alerted the police control room.

The police, along with the Fire and Emergency Services personnel and passers-by, used a crane to pull out the car before shifting the victims to the hospital, where the doctors declared them as brought dead.

The Chickballapur traffic police are awaiting the post-mortem report and the vehicle inspection report for investigation.

5,965 driving licences suspended in State in 3 years for fatal accidents

Karnataka recorded a total of 29,173 fatal accidents during the same period — 2020–21 to 2022–23, according to data from the Transport Department

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Driving licences (DL) of 5,965 persons have been suspended by the Transport Department in the past three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) for causing fatal road accidents across Karnataka. The period saw a total of 29,173 fatal accidents, reveals data from the Transport Department.

When asked about the huge gap between the number of accidents and the number of licence suspensions, traffic expert M.N. Sreehari said: "The suspension of licences cannot be done in all cases, as some people appeal against it. If there is no valid reason, then the suspension gets quashed in courts. While the driver can be made A1 in a case where he is directly involved, in some cases, there will be indirect involvement, like when the brake fails, or when other events lead to an accident. In such cases, suspension of licence is unlikely."

He added that some people also use their influence at the local police stations, or identify some legal loopholes, to avoid suspension of licence.

A file photo of vehicles involved in an accident on Bengaluru-Mysuru highway. Belagavi topped the chart with 2,295 fatal accidents in the three-year period.

Answering a question raised by S. Suresh Kumar, MLA of Rajajinagar, during the ongoing legislature session, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy revealed statistics of fatal accidents.

Bengaluru Urban district recorded 621 accidents in 2020 - 21 and in 2021-22, and 752 in 2022-23. Bengaluru Rural district recorded 534 accidents in 2020 - 21, 496 in 2021 - 22, and 573 in 2022 - 23.

Belagavi topped the chart with 2,295 fatal accidents in the three-year period (683 in 2020 - 21, 754 in 2021 - 22, and 857 in 2022 - 23). The district was followed by Bengaluru Urban (1,994), Tumakuru (1,917), Bengaluru Rural (1,603), and Mysuru (1,554).

Two labourers returning home from work killed in accident at Jigani

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Two labourers were killed when they lost control of their motorcycle while negotiating a hump and crashed into a bus on Anekal road in Jigani on Sunday.

The deceased were identified as Fokircharan Prasad, 29, and his friend Birsingh Nayak, 24, natives of Odisha.

Returning home

According to the police, they were working as helpers at a private company and were returning home in Indlawadi village after finishing the night shift.

The police said the duo failed to notice a hump and lost control.

As the bike was speeding, it crashed into the bus and the two men were severely injured.

Passers-by rushed them to a nearby hospital while alerting the police, where the doctors declared them as brought dead.

The Jigani police have registered a case and are investigating.

SIT closes in on the money trail in bitcoin scam

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the bitcoin scam is close to identifying a money trail that may finally establish that bitcoins were indeed forcefully stolen, diverted into wallets and encashed. If the SIT is successful in this, it would for the first time provide clinching evidence of a "scam" in the case.

Investigation of several officials posted with the Parappana Agrahara prison where hacker Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki was lodged in and Central Crime Branch and other source-based information, has reportedly given SIT officials leads that bitcoins, so "diverted" from Sriki, may have been encashed in local Indian banks, through a web of transactions.

Till now, it was believed that if the bitcoins were indeed diverted and encashed they would have happened overseas, making tracking down these transactions difficult. However, establishing a money trail from bitcoins to individuals may be easier if they were cashed here, sources said.

A source privy to the investigation said they have leads that suggest even high profile beneficiaries cashed out their bitcoins through a circuitous route in local banks.

Sriki was first arrested by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) in a drug peddling via darknet case. Later, they found out that he was a hacker. It is believed that he had stolen several bitcoins from Bitfinex, a major Bitcoin exchange. These blacklisted coins were moved while he was in judicial custody, leading to allegations that several individuals forced him to divert these stolen bitcoins to their wallets.

According to sources in the know, a few people who had taken bitcoins from Sriki had moved the same to different wallets with his help and later moved them to another Bitcoin trading exchange. The coins were also broken into different wallets. The coins which were moved from the wallet to Bitcoin exchanges were further pushed into bank accounts in India and cashed.

A senior official said the SIT can now try to reverse engineer from the end point bank transactions to the bitcoins and then to hacker Sriki. "It is a complex process, but since the end point seems to be local banks, it is not impossible," the official said.

By the people

Folk artists taking part in the Namma Jaatre rally, from the Vidhana Soudha to Ravindra Kalakshetra, as part of the Unboxing Bengaluru Habba organised by the Department of Kannada and Culture, in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (December 11, Monday), the following articles are available:

- On the listing of cases in the Supreme Court **bit.ly/supremeadmin**
- How fractals offer a new way to see the quantum realm **bit.ly/quantumphysicsdimensions**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Study finds protein from Budgett's frog can block enzymes of disease-causing pathogens

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Researchers from the Indian Institute of Science's (IISc.) molecular biophysics unit in a study have identified that peptides (short protein) produced from Budgett's frog can combat enzymes of disease causing pathogens

According to IISc., peptides (short proteins) produced from the skin of amphibians have long been studied because of their ability to counter unfavourable conditions in the environment, including harmful pathogens.

Mihir Rami, Mohd. Shafique, and Siddhartha Sarma at the unit have studied LL-TIL, one such peptide found in skin secretions of Budgett's frog.

According to researchers, frogs have developed a defensive mechanism through their skin, which helps combat microorganisms.

According to Mr. Rami, Budgett's frog found in South America is kept as a pet in many countries because of their intelligent behaviour.

"Frogs are the first vertebrates to conquer the land and all other vertebrates like reptiles, mammals, and birds came after the amphibians. Because of this the frogs have developed a defensive mechanism through their skin. They generally combat the microorganisms and other harmful things through their skins," said Mr. Rami.

The IISc. said that the researchers found that the frog-secreted peptide inhibited two key enzymes called subtilisin carlsberg and proteinase K., produced by pathogens.

"These enzymes play a pivotal role in promoting infections by degrading specific protective proteins of the infected person. The team used various spectroscopic techniques and protein assays to study the binding of the amphibian peptide to the pathogenic enzymes. The peptide was shown to act through a slow-tight binding pathway, and was found to be as effective as SSI, a well-known subtilisin inhibitor," said IISc.

The study further revealed an in-depth mechanism of this inhibitory action, using structural and dynamic models. The researchers show the formation of a Michaelis complex - a tight, noncovalent complex with the intact inhibitor - during the process.

APPOINTMENT

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Our website : www.gandhividyashram.com

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NOTICE FOR ADMISSION INTO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN MANAGEMENT (DPM) – 2024

Specialization: Communication, Economics, Finance and Accounting, Humanities and Social Sciences, Information Systems, Marketing Management, Operations Management and Quantitative Techniques, Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management, Strategic Management.

Financial Support: Stipend of Rs. 40,000/- to Rs. 45,000/- per month, International Conference Grant of Rs. 2 Lakhs, National Conference Grant of Rs. 1.2 Lakhs, Research Development Grant of Rs. 1.5 Lakhs. Free boarding and lodging for the students.

Last date for submission of the online application form is **February 15, 2024.**
For detailed information, please visit **www.iimidr.ac.in**

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Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.

NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

For Charter hire of one Platform Supply Vessel (PSV)/ Offshore Supply Vessel (OSV) on long term basis for converting it into a WSV by ONGC for Indian offshore

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), is the flagship national integrated E&P Company of India (**www.ongcindia.com**). Well Stimulation Services (WSS), ONGC, India intends to Charter hire One Platform Supply Vessel/Offshore Supply Vessel on long term basis of 09 years with provision for further extension by 07 years for the purpose of converting it into a Well Stimulation Vessel for its offshore operations in the Arabian Sea, western offshore, India.

The interested Firms/Vessel Owners willing to enter into such long term contract with ONGC may visit the website of ONGC **'tenders.ongc.co.in'** for details.

• **Interactive discussions/presentations:** The EOI meet shall be held on **22nd December, 2023** at a suitable time based on the time zones of the respondents through offline physical/virtual meeting on digital media. Interested bidders are requested to convey their willingness to participate in the EOI meet along with the names and e-mail id of the participants on or before 20 December, 2023 to send the link of invitation of joining the EOI meet to the following e-mail id.

Sh Priyanshu Vajpeyi, SE (P), WSS
E mail: vajpeyi_priyanshu@ongc.co.in

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Increase in India's power consumption from April-November

9 in percentage. Power consumption has increased to 1,099.90 billion units (BU) during April-November in 2023-24 compared to the same period a year ago, showing a surge in economic activities. PTI

The export of agri-commodities in September

17.93 in lakh tonnes. Exports of agri-commodities including Basmati rice, declined in September this year compared to 27.94 lakh tonnes in August. PTI

The decrease in India's coal imports from April to October

4.2 in percentage. India's coal imports dropped to 148.13 million tonnes (MT) in April-October of FY2023-24. India's coal imports were 154.72 MT in the corresponding period of the last fiscal. PTI

The Rohingya Muslims fleeing Myanmar to reach Indonesia

300 Two boats carrying Rohingya Muslims, including emaciated women and children, arrived at Indonesia's province of Aceh on Sunday morning after being adrift for weeks. AP

The death toll in Gaza due to the ongoing Israel-Hamas war

17,700 Two-thirds of the deaths in Gaza were women and children, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On listing of cases in the Supreme Court

What do the two open letters penned separately by senior lawyers Dushyant Dave and Prashant Bhushan state? Has the top court responded to these letters? What role does the Chief Justice of India have in allocating cases to different Benches?

EXPLAINER

Krishnadas Rajagopal

The story so far:

Two letters written separately by lawyers, Dushyant Dave and Prashant Bhushan, addressed directly to the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and the Supreme Court Registry, respectively, complaining of "irregularities" in the listing of cases have sharply divided the Bar.

What did the letters say?

Mr. Dave, in his open letter to the Chief Justice, said cases, some of them involving human rights and functioning of statutory and constitutional institutions, had been suddenly "taken away" from Benches hearing them and listed before other Benches. He said matters, instead of remaining with the presiding judge of the Bench which earlier issued notice (first coram) had followed the puisne judge (second coram) when the latter started heading a new Bench in "clear disregard" of rules, procedure and established conventions. The senior lawyer said the Chief Justice as the 'master of the roster' should look into the issue.

The letter was penned a few days after Mr. Dave, on November 29, appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Bela Trivedi in a petition filed by the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption concerning a fresh inquiry into corruption charges against former Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami in an alleged State Highway tender scam, questioned the move to take the case from a Bench led by Aniruddha Bose, before which it was listed previously. The Bench headed by Justice Trivedi, who was earlier the puisne judge in Justice Bose's Bench, dismissed the case on December 8.

Mr. Bhushan wrote his letter on the same day to the Registrar (Listing) of the Supreme Court. He focused on the journey of a batch of petitions filed by advocates and journalists who were charged under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for their work and critical views about the state's response to the Tripura violence of October 2021. These petitions were earlier listed before a Bench headed by Justice Chandrachud, which had passed substantive orders to protect the petitioners from coercive action by the State. In October 2023, it, however, came up before a Bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose and Trivedi, which ordered the cases to be listed before the "appropriate Bench". However, instead of being listed before Justice Chandrachud again, the petitions came up on November 29 before the Bench headed by Justice Trivedi. When Mr. Bhushan pointed out to Justice Trivedi that the case had "departed from the normal course of listing" and should be referred back to the Chief Justice for appropriate orders on the administrative side, Justice Trivedi's Bench said the case was listed as per earlier orders and the petitioners were free to take action.

GETTY IMAGES

What do the rules say?

The issues highlighted in the letters are two. Firstly, the movement of cases, already listed and in which notices were issued by a Bench, to another Bench. Secondly, whether a case can "follow" a puisne judge when the senior judge, who was heading the court before which the matter was earlier listed, was still available. The two lawyers insist that the CJI, as master of roster who has administrative control over the allocation of cases, should respond.

The Supreme Court Rules of 2013 are silent as to the powers of the master of the roster to constitute roster, Benches and for allocation of cases. However, the Handbook on Practice and Procedure of the Court and Office Procedure on the judicial side published by the Supreme Court in 2017 explicitly says that the Registry functions on the general and special instructions and orders of the Chief Justice of India as regards allocation of work to a Bench and assignment of cases from one Bench, on account of non-availability, to another Bench.

Mr. Dave pointed to the section on 'cases, coram and listing' to note that once a case has been listed or notice issued or dismissed or disposed of or heard in part at admission hearing stage, it can only be listed before the Bench of the first coram and none other. Mr. Bhushan, in his turn, referred to Clause 15 of the 'Overview of the New Scheme for Automated Listing of Cases' published also in 2017, which noted that "subject to the orders of the Chief Justice of India, if the court directs listing or tagging with a matter pending in another court, and the matter is listed accordingly, the coram of the main matter, with which the matter is directed to listed/tagged, will prevail". He claimed that both Clause 15 and the procedure in the Handbook were "arbitrarily breached".

What has the Supreme Court said?

The SC has not officially responded to the letters. Supreme Court Bar Association president, senior advocate Adish C. Aggarwala, has written to the Chief Justice, expressing "shock" about Mr. Dave's open letter. He said the assignment of cases was not open to question on the judicial or the administrative side. The Supreme Court has in its judgment said the Chief Justice, as master of roster, occupied a position which is sui generis. It said the "entrustment of functions to the Chief Justice as the head of the institution is with the purpose of securing the position of the Supreme Court as an independent safeguard for the preservation of personal liberty. The oath of office demands nothing less".

THE GIST

- Dushyant Dave, in his open letter to the Chief Justice, said cases, some of them involving human rights and functioning of statutory and constitutional institutions, had been suddenly "taken away" from Benches hearing them and listed before other Benches.
- Prashant Bhushan focused on the journey of a batch of petitions filed by advocates and journalists who were charged under the UAPA for their work about the state's response to the Tripura violence of October 2021. These petitions were earlier listed before a Bench headed by Justice Chandrachud, which had passed substantive orders to protect the petitioners from coercive action by the State. In October 2023, it, however, came up before a Bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose and Trivedi.
- The Supreme Court has not responded to the letters.

What is the controversy over Germany's debt brake rule?

What did the Karlsruhe court rule with respect to reallocating funds for the pandemic to the climate fund?

Garimella Subramaniam

The story so far:

Germany's constitutional court on November 15 ruled unlawful a government move to reallocate €60 billion, unused from the sums initially earmarked for the pandemic emergency, to a "climate and transformation fund" (KTF). The coalition government led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz's centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) was in breach of the fiscal deficit limits enshrined in 2009 on two counts, the Karlsruhe court ruled. The first was the move to channel underutilised allocations from one sector to another and the second, the roll-over of debt from one fiscal year to the next. The judgment has reopened fissures in Mr. Scholz's fractious coalition, even within the SPD, where divergent views have been voiced on the budget brake rule.

What is the debt brake rule?

The debt brake rule, or the balanced budget rule, sets a cap on how much governments can borrow to finance various public projects. It restricts the federal government in Berlin from running a fiscal deficit in excess of 0.35% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and in effect prohibits the country's 16 regions from any deficit spending whatsoever. The measure was enshrined into law in 2009 by the grand coalition government of the centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU), its sister party in the state of Bavaria the Christian Social Union (CSU) and the SPD, through an amendment to the German constitution. The budget brake is more or less the domestic version of the stringent borrowing and spending curbs built into the European Union (EU)'s Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) and the 2012 Fiscal Compact Treaty.

What was the legal challenge about?

The plaintiffs to the dispute, the opposition CDU and CSU, contended that investments in climate change and energy transition were part of the long-term financing activities of the state. As such, these could not be funded from the emergency exemption provided in the debt brake, which was related specifically to COVID-19 relief. The government countered that the diverted money addressed the economic consequences of the pandemic, insofar as the investment shortfall could be linked to the economic impact from COVID-19.

How has Germany fared after 2009?

The record has been mixed. Through successive years in the last decade, Germany's export driven economy registered impressive rates of growth and ran budget surpluses, backed by high levels of employment compared to other states in the single currency union. Businesses borrowed cheap, thanks to the European Central Bank (ECB)'s ultra-low interest rate policies. Therefore, the government slashed net borrowing to achieve a zero-deficit budget – a scenario Berlin sold as a simple case of practising what it professed, an ideal recipe for a single currency union reeling from a sovereign debt crisis. Criticism that the biggest economy in the EU's single currency area ought to adopt expansionary fiscal measures to cushion several countries that were reeling under a severe recession went almost unnoticed.

Come 2019, a cooling economy during a global downturn turned the spotlight on the cost of under-investment in infrastructure, viewed as critical to restore Germany's competitiveness. Commentators and business lobbies questioned the reticence to take advantage of the ECB's ultra-low rates of interest and expansive bond buying programme, while others pointed to higher taxation as a preferred route out of stagnant investment. Angela Merkel, then Chancellor, argued that Germany, with the world's largest number of elderly population, could not burden its shrinking young population with additional debt. In 2020, the debt brake rule was suspended to raise record levels of borrowing to fund various pandemic measures and was on course to be reinstated this year.

What next?

It is unclear, even after the Karlsruhe verdict, whether Berlin will moderate its stance on fiscal rectitude as EU leaders deliberate new proposals to customise debt and deficit rules specific to a country's macro-economic parameters.

The writer is Director, Strategic Initiatives, AgnoShin Technologies.

THE GIST

- Germany's constitutional court on November 16 ruled unlawful a government move to reallocate €60 billion, unused from the sums initially earmarked for the pandemic emergency, to a "climate and transformation fund".
- The plaintiffs to the dispute, the opposition, contended that investments in climate change and energy transition were part of the long-term financing activities of the state. As such, these could not be funded from the emergency exemption provided in the debt brake rule.
- The debt brake rule, or the balanced budget rule, sets a cap on how much governments can borrow to finance various public projects.

Price of Rajamudi rice breaches ₹100 mark owing to depleted supply

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

The price of Rajamudi, a rice variety cultivated in a small area around Hassan which is popular for its taste and perceived health benefits, has hit a record high. If the regular Sona Masuri rice varieties saw a rise in prices by an average of 25% due to deficient rainfall earlier, the Rajamudi variety has seen a steep hike of almost 100%.

With the Rajamudi cultivated area coming down this year due to drought, the price in Bengaluru increased to a range of ₹100 to ₹110 a kg a fortnight ago, from ₹52 to ₹60 a kg a few months back. The organic Rajamudi variety costs around ₹130 a kg and above. A quintal of Rajamudi paddy that was around ₹2,500 last year, is now more than ₹4,000, a record high for this variety.

Growing areas

Severe drought in the unique cultivating area in Holenarsipur, Channarayaptana, and Arkalgud taluks of Hassan district, parts of Periyapatna taluk of Mysuru district, and parts of Kushalanagar in Kodagu district has led to a steep reduction in the cultivation of Rajamudi this year. While the current stock that is being sold is from the December 2022 harvest, the new paddy will be harvested this month but the yield is expected to be low. Unlike other paddy varieties that are about 120-day crops, Rajamudi is a 140- to 150-day crop.

Cause and effect: Rajamudi rice is cultivated in a small area around Hassan. Severe drought has led to its price doubling.

"Farmers dependent on the Hemavati water from the reservoir at Gorur did not get sufficient water from canals and a large area remained uncultivated. Those who receive the Hemavati water through gravitational canals directly from the river had cultivated sugarcane already," Hoysala S. Appaji of Rajamudi Growers' Association in Holenarsipur told *The Hindu*. "Against a normal 1 to 1.25 lakh acre under Rajamudi cultivation, this year saw a cultivation in about 30% to 40% of the total area." He said that whatever is trickling into the market now is what is being sold by farmers who had held a small stock for their personal consumption.

Dattatreya, a farmer at Kanagalu village in Periyapatna taluk, said that those farmers cultivating in command areas of tanks where water was available could grow Rajamudi. "Farmers have also reduced Rajamudi cultivation since it is not lucrative. The yield is about 16 to 18 quintals an acre. Due to erratic rainfall this year, some farmers also shifted to ragi." He said, "Farmers have not benefitted much from the price increase. By the time the price went up most farmers had sold their produce. Only a few who had held stocks have benefitted."

Acknowledging the huge price increase, president of the Bengaluru Wholesale Grains and Pulses Merchants Association Ramesh Chandra Lahoti said, "It is true that the price of Rajmudi has doubled. But where is the crop? There is no water or rain. We have to see in December what quantity of Rajamudi flows into the market and that will determine prices."

In contrast, he pointed out that the price of the new arrival of Sona Masuri varieties had dropped by 6% to 8% whereas the price of old rice remained steady. "The wholesale price of old raw rice in Sona Masuri variety is about ₹55 to ₹60 a kg whereas the price of new arrivals of raw rice is around ₹52 a kg. The price of Sona Masuri steamed rice in the new crop this year is about ₹48 a kg."

Sunil Kumar of Bengaluru-based Arogya Organics, which sources Rajamudi from organic FPOs, admitted that the sale of Rajamudi had taken a hit due to high cost while there had been variations in supply too. "Organic Rajamudi which was around ₹70 a kg a few months ago, is now around ₹130. Though a similar spike had happened a couple of years ago despite a good crop, Rajamudi breached the ₹100 mark for the first a fortnight ago."

Top Cong. Minister in talks with BJP on joining party after LS polls: HDK

The former Chief Minister refused to spell out the name of the Minister, who he claimed will join the saffron party with 50 legislators

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Continuing his attack on the government, former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy hinted at the possible collapse of the Congress government in Karnataka after the Lok Sabha polls, claiming that a top Minister had already held talks with BJP leaders at the Centre.

Speaking to presspersons in Hassan on Sunday, Mr. Kumaraswamy said he had information that a Congress Minister consulted BJP senior leaders at the Centre assuring that he would come out with 50 legislators. "A Minister has gone to the leaders at the Centre with an application to join them after the Lok Sabha polls. He has sought 'relief' for another six months so that he can join them with 50 or 60 MLAs," he said. However, he did not spell out the name of the Congress Minister.

Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy addressing a press conference in Hassan on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Anything can happen after the Lok Sabha polls," he said. "Something similar to what happened in Maharashtra can happen here too. Nobody is honest or committed to the party. They will look after their individual benefits. This has happened all along in politics," the former Chief Minister said.

The Congress has been boasting about having won 135 seats in the State Assembly polls. "However, we know what their actual position will be in the Lok Sabha elections," he commented.

Referring to the socio-economic survey, Mr. Kumaraswamy said that the Chief Minister was trying to "divide people on caste lines" in the name of caste census. Further, on the CM's assurance of ₹10,000 crore for the development of minorities, Mr. Kumaraswamy said he was not opposed to providing funds for the Muslims. "But what about the Hindus? All Hindus are not upper castes. There are Dalits and the poor. What about them?" he said.

On copra prices

Commenting on the dip in copra prices, Mr. Kumarswamy said coconut growers in Hassan, Tumakuru, and other districts suffered due to the fall.

"The State government has treated coconut growers like beggars by announcing a support price of only ₹1,200 per quintal. The people of the State should understand how the government is treating them," he said.

'I regret criticising RSS leader in the past'

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Expressing regret over his past comments on Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh leader Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat, the former Chief Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy on Saturday said his earlier statements and criticism of Mr. Bhat was based on information that was "fed with an intent to mislead him".

Speaking at the flood-lit 'Kreedotsava' of Sri Rama School at Kalladka in Bantwal taluk, which is run by Sri Rama Vidyakendra Trust headed by Mr. Bhat, Mr. Kumaraswamy said, "I express my deep regret for criticism in the past, which was based on what some people had told me intending to mislead me. This visit today has transformed me." He commended the efforts of the school in providing value-based education to students. and making the latter remain grounded in native culture, tradition and heritage.

Siddaramaiah promises to look into demands of Ediga community

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Minister Madhu Bangarappa and actor Shivarajkumar during the Ediga convention in Bengaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The government will look into the pending issue of setting up Narayana Guru Study Chair as soon as the legislature session ends, said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Speaking after inaugurating the Arya Ediga-Billava convention here on Sunday, the Chief Minister said the leaders had presented a list of demands for the welfare of the community, but he was constrained not to make specific promises since legislature session was going on. "But the government will take necessary action as soon as the session is over," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking about Narayana Guru, social reformer and community icon, he said the philosophy of the seer was still relevant. "He spent a lifetime for the welfare of backward communities despite the insults he had suffered during his lifetime. He fought against the oppressive caste system and built temples for them at a time when they were denied temple entry," Mr. Siddaramaiah added.

'Industries availing govt. incentives are not fulfilling their obligations'

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Chandrappa M. representing Holalkere constituency has alleged that industries that avail of the incentives offered to them to start operations violate the conditions on providing jobs to locals as per the Sarojini Mahishi recommendations and payment of taxes after conclusion of tax holiday period. After raising a question on the investors' meets in the last three years during Question Hour on Friday, Mr. Chandrappa said some industries were not fulfilling their obligations after availing the concessions and infrastructure facilities. He cited automobile company Toyota, which started operations in Bidadi in 1995-96. He alleged that the firm failed to pay tax dues to the government even after conclusion of the holiday period.

Replying to the matter, Minister M.B. Patil assured to get information about the same.

Nanjundaswamy is reason behind my entry into politics, says CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah went down memory lane and recalled his early years of politics during the launch of the autobiography by writer and film-maker T.N. Seetharam on Sunday.

Releasing Mr. Seetharam's autobiography *Nenapina Putagalu* at Bengaluru, the Chief Minister said, "Mr. Seetharam is a close friend with almost 40 years of association. I used to visit *Lankesh Patrike* office. While I was a law student, farmers' leader Prof. M.D. Nanjundaswamy was a law college professor. He used to hold discussions with the students who were interested in politics."

These discussions had inspired him into politics and he became a member of Samajwadi Yuva Janasabha, he said.

"Prof. Nanjundaswamy is the reason behind my political career," the Chief Minister said.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

All children abroad?

During a discussion on the new National Education Policy (NEP) last week at the ongoing legislature session in Belagavi, members after members of the Council held forth on quality of education. Kota Srinivas Poojary (*in picture*) of the BJP, who initiated the discussion, said that the State government's decision to scrap NEP and to draft a State Education Policy (SEP) would create "two classes" of citizens. He alleged that the children of the rich would choose NEP and get "quality education" and the children of the poor will be constrained to go to State schools, choose SEP and therefore, get "low quality" education. Most BJP and JD(S) members -- Shashil Namoshi, M.K. Naveen, N. Ravi Kumar, D.S. Arun, Chidananda Gowda, S.V. Sankanur, A. Devegowda, T.A. Sharavana, Sunil Vallyapure -- repeatedly said the children of most of the members in the House were studying in foreign countries. "Is there anyone whose children are in India?" asked Mr. Namoshi rhetorically. He replied to himself with an emphatic "no." Interestingly, none stood up to contradict him.

Endless 'last warnings'

The frequency with which "development reviews" are held by the MLAs and MPs in districts belie the kind of progress, or the lack of it, at the grassroots. And with more than 50 departments under each ZP, it is a given that only a handful of officials will be called to question and over the years those heading the departments have mastered the art of talking endlessly about a project without revealing anything.

And so it was in a recent "review meeting" and Mysuru MP Pratap Simha chaired to assess the progress of the Central government projects under implementation. On a query pertaining to coverage of microfinance to street vendors, it transpired that certain banks were delaying the release of funds on flimsy grounds - a complaint which was also raised in the previous meeting. And the meeting before it as well.

The official response from the bank officials was the stock reply of "they were at it" or the applications were in the "final stages of approval" or it was being "processed at the head office". After a few observations expressing dismay over the delay, the meeting was adjourned with a warning that any further delay would be "viewed seriously".

If one imagined that such warnings would bring out an attitudinal change among the officials, one could not be more wrong.

A lesson in 'Operation'

The Opposition BJP, which has perfected the art of 'Operation Lotus', a political strategy to engineer defection of MLAs from rival parties to form a government even after failing to secure a majority, seems to also have a suggestion for Speakers of the Legislative Assembly eyeing the post of a Minister.

During the ongoing Assembly session in Belagavi, the BJP shared the idea with Speaker U.T. Khader. When the attendance in the treasury benches was thin at the start of the morning session as many Ministers as well as MLAs were yet to arrive, the BJP MLAs, particularly the seniors including Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok, S. Suresh Kumar and Basanagouda Patil Yatnal advised him to crack the whip. The BJP MLAs went on to add that an "incentive" awaited Mr. Khader if he is stern with the ruling party and takes strict steps against them. The ruling party will ease him out of the chair and accommodate him in the Ministry if he acts tough on the existing Ministers, they said, tongue-in-cheek. However, Mr. Khader was quick to say he had no Ministerial ambition.

Rishikesh Bahadur Desai
R. Krishna Kumar
Laiqh A. Khan

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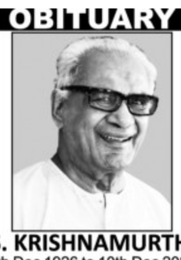
OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

S. KRISHNAMURTHI
9th Dec 1926 to 10th Dec 2023
Attained Satgati, early morning on 10th Dec, 2023.
Deeply Mourned by:
Rajaram & Lalitha, Usha & Ramdas and family.

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mrs. Leela Unni
11-12-1942 | 9-12-2008
STAFF AND MANAGEMENT OF PHOENIX MEDICAL SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.

LEGAL NOTICE

BEFORE THE HON'BLE IIND ADDITIONAL MUNSIFFS COURT, ERNAKULAM
OS NO: 1232/2022
PLAINTIFF: **Careon Healthcare Solutions (P) Ltd,** Kinfra Hi-Tech Bio Technology Park, HMT Colony, Kochi, Pin-683503. represented by its power of Attorney holder **Mr. JOHN M.M,**
DEFENDANT Mr. RAJESH, Proprietor, SRI BALAJI DRUGLINES, PHARMASUITICAL & SURGICAL, 4, Ground Floor, Annapurna STG Park Nest, Near Amma Ashram, Bangalor-560056.
To,
Take notice that an OS No: 1232/2022 of IInd Additional Munsiff's Court, Ernakulam has been presented by Advocate Sri. K.N. Chandrababu on behalf of the plaintiff, against the defendant shown above and posted for hearing on the 6th day of January 2024.
If no appearance is made on your behalf by yourself or by your pleader, or by someone by law authorized to act for you in the above case, it will be heard and decided in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Court, this 23rd day of November 2023.
Advocate K. N. Chandrababu
sd/- by the Order Central Nazar

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Name of holder–Sunil Kumar Gupta
Kind of Securities and Face value-Equity and 10/_
No. of Securities-100
Distinctive number-10538611-10538710
Place–Agra
Date-11.12.2023

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAJALAKSHMI Rangachar, W/o Late Sreenivasa Rangachar, R/at No.1113, 10th D Cross Road, Mahalakshmipuram, Bangalore-560086, have declare my name from Rajalakshmi Rangachar to Rajalakshmi vide affidavit dated 08/12/2023 before Notary K.S.Sridhar, Bengaluru.

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GETTY IMAGES

Can ChatGPT, the chatbot developed by OpenAI, replace human therapists?

OpenAI announced that it had upgraded ChatGPT with voice and image capabilities, allowing users to chat with it, making conversations with the software more personal. What happens when people begin to see and use the AI large language model as a therapist?

Sahana Venugopal

An OpenAI officer came under fire on X (formerly Twitter) in September for comparing her conversation with ChatGPT to therapy, despite admitting she had never experienced therapy before.

Lilian Weng's X bio said she worked on AI safety at the start-up behind the viral chatbot while the company website noted she worked on Applied AI Research. "Just had a quite emotional, personal conversation w/ ChatGPT in voice mode, talking about stress, work-life balance. Interestingly I felt heard & warm. Never tried therapy before but this is probably it? Try it especially if you usually just use it as a productivity tool," she posted on X on September 26.

Just a day earlier, OpenAI said it had upgraded ChatGPT with voice and image capabilities, allowing users to chat with it, share photos, and listen to responses. The voice mode feature is now open to all users. OpenAI suggested that people could use this upgrade to settle family dinner table debates or even have a bedtime story read to them.

Ms. Weng was criticised for seemingly promoting ChatGPT as a tool capable of providing therapeutic services, especially after admitting that she was not qualified to comment on the therapy experience. Others accused her of coming under the ELIZA effect.

A day later, Ms. Weng posted that people's interactions with AI models differed and that her statements were her personal opinion.

Even so, the OpenAI employee is far from the only person who has turned to ChatGPT – the world's fastest growing consumer app earlier this year – to find solutions for their mental health challenges or even just a "warm" listener.

What is the ELIZA effect?

ELIZA effect is the phenomenon in which people think computer programs or similar systems have become capable of human emotions or functions because of the way they respond to user input. It is named after a 1960s computer program which also responded to users, albeit with very basic sentences that echoed their original words. This program was credited to MIT professor Joseph Weizenbaum.

A user who receives responses from ChatGPT may believe that they are having a meaningful or mutually beneficial interaction that is somehow comparable to a human conversation, rather than seeing ChatGPT as a large language model simply generating data. This is an example of the ELIZA effect.

ChatGPT: free and available 24x7

Sanskriti*, 29, a journalist based in Mumbai, goes to (human-led) therapy but has also reached out to ChatGPT to get help with life challenges, even though she is aware this is not recommended and knows the chatbot generates incorrect answers at times.

"I only book therapy when I need clarity, or things are getting out of hand in terms of anxiety, or there is a new pattern I am noticing, because therapy is expensive, and usually when you are anxious it arises [in] the middle of the night or at some weird hour and you want to quickly calm yourself down," she said.

She explained that her anxiety was usually driven by not knowing something or having misleading information. ChatGPT helped her find the certainty she needed in order to calm down. "Therapists can't be available at the break of dawn," she pointed out. Sanskriti noticed that when entering questions into the chatbot that would better suit a human therapist, ChatGPT did provide counsel, along with a disclaimer encouraging her to seek the services of a qualified professional.

"Is ChatGPT comparable to human therapy? Of course not," Sanskriti said. "I would say ChatGPT really helps, but I think there's a lot of communication with a human therapist. You don't have to use certain formats to write [to a human therapist]. With ChatGPT, you need to know the commands, you need to know how ChatGPT will respond."

The Hindu tried out the free ChatGPT version with the voice mode, where users could choose from friendly male, female, and gender-neutral voices in order to get spoken answers. After complaining via the ChatGPT app that the user was suffering from a cold, a voice named "Ember" was sympathetic and suggested home remedies such as warm soup, before offering to help with more specific symptoms.

Knocking at the digital door

Many people worldwide turn to the internet to seek out health information privately, according to Jim Downs, historian and author of the book *Maladies of Empire: How Colonialism, Slavery, and War Transformed Medicine*. "Web-MD and other online resources, like ChatG[P]T, allow for an anonymity that many patients desire to avoid the stigma of being labelled unhealthy or sick. Historically, patients have feared clinicians pathologising their behaviour, bodies, and, even, their identities," Mr. Downs said.

However, AI chatbots may not be ready to bridge this doctor-patient divide. Researchers have claimed that AI chatbots largely generate results which favour India's privileged castes and economic classes while possibly excluding marginalised communities, reported *Reuters* in September. In the healthcare sector, ChatGPT was shown to generate false results claiming there were physiological differences in Black people's bodies when compared to other races, per a study in the *Digital Medicine* journal.

Looking back, Mr. Downs explained that fields such as epidemiology (the study of diseases and how they affect groups of people) largely emerged from slavery or colonialism, with doctors studying the spread of diseases in subjugated populations – such as Indians under the British rule in the 19th century. "This same pattern applies to the birth of psychology as a field. It emerged from specific historical case studies that articulated Indian and other people of colour throughout the world as inferior to white Europeans," Mr. Downs said.

He pointed to scholar Sunil Bhatia's book *Decolonizing Psychology*, which explores how early psychology was based on unscientific ideas of white supremacy over colonised Indians. Mr. Downs stressed on the importance of including multiple cultures and complex identities when recognising health conditions even today. "Therefore, we need to be suspicious of AI generated understandings of health and illness because they may propagate Eurocentric understandings of medicine that fail to recognise the cultural specificity of the people of India and in other cultures around the world," he said.

A stop-gap arrangement?

Sanskriti noted that matching with the right (human) therapist is a process of trial and error, but insisted that finding one is still important.

"I feel I am more at ease when I'm talking to a therapist because it's a more free-flowing conversation. Her insights are deeper. It also comes from the previous sessions," she said, explaining how her therapist was able to identify triggers or link certain anecdotes to her childhood, which ChatGPT cannot do.

On the other hand, Sanskriti recalled how ChatGPT helped her when she was facing a medical emergency at home. The chatbot answered some of her healthcare doubts, which let her decide what kind of specialists to contact and what her next step should be. Her therapist would not have been qualified or even permitted to help in this area.

"It is not layered, it is not insightful. But I feel sometimes ChatGPT manages to ease my anxiety for that very moment," Sanskriti admitted.

*(*Name changed to protect privacy)*

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Here's a quiz on some prominent Indians who share their birthday on December 11

Srinivasan Ramani

QUESTION 1

Name this flamboyant Indian cricketer, who remains the only one to have represented India in Test cricket after being born in Afghanistan.

QUESTION 2

If Anil Kumble was the first Indian cricketer to take 10 wickets in a Test innings in 1999, name the Indian leg spinner who achieved the feat first in first class cricket (in 1954-55).

QUESTION 3

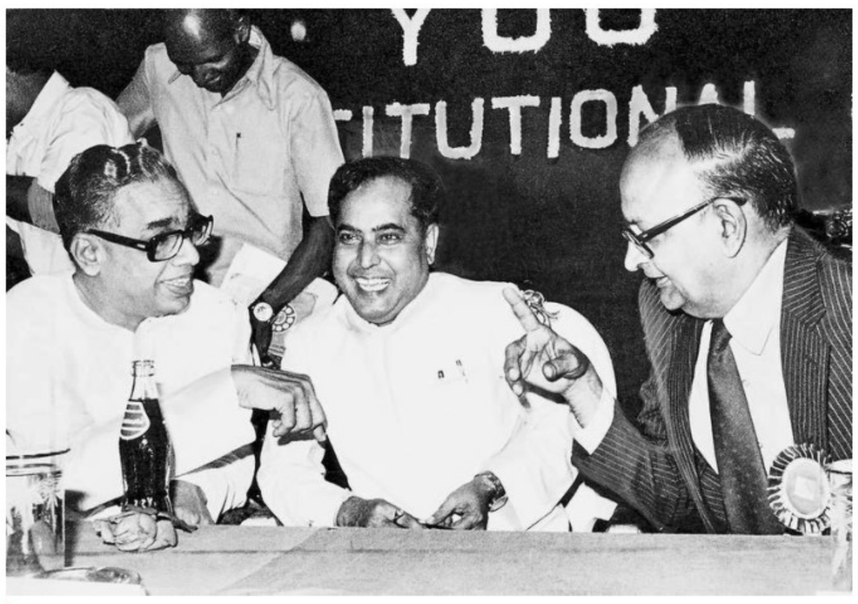
One of only three Indian sportspersons to be honoured with the Padma Vibhushan, this person achieved a first for his sport as an 18 year old India in 1988. Name this 54 year old, who still remains India's number 1 in the sport.

QUESTION 4

A social reformer, freedom fighter, journalist and more popularly known as "Mahakavi", this person died at an early age of 38, but remains one of India's greatest Tamil literary figures. Name him.

QUESTION 5

The only Indian to have won the Nishan-e-Imtiaz, Pakistan's highest civilian honour, this prominent actor is said to have been among the pioneers in method acting. Name him.



Visual question:
Name the person in the centre who went on to become the President of India. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the December 8 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The name of Taylor Swift's first single. **Ans: 'Tim Macgraw'**
2. The singer wrote a song for Hannah Montana: The Movie titled "Don't Walk Away". Is the statement correct or false? **Ans: False.**
3. This Swift song was on Rolling Stone's 2021 revision of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. **Ans: 'All too well'**
4. The first short film for which Swift won the MTV Video Music Award for best direction. **Ans: The Man**
5. This song from her album 'Lover', went No: 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, four years after its release. **Ans: 'Cruel Summer'**
6. The two re-recorded versions of Swift's older albums released this year. **Ans: 'Speak now' and '1989'**
Visual: Name the song. **Ans: 'You are on your own, kid'**
Early Birds: Drashti| Maitreyi Karekar| Animesh Mohan| Vinee Dhaanda

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

It takes her time to warm up to people

Well, at least she is not a doom-monger like our previous manager and her friends

S. Upendran

"How was meeting the new boss?"

"She didn't come across as friendly."

"I've heard she's excellent. Everyone says it takes time to warm up to her."

"Warm up to her? What does it mean?"

"It means to begin to like someone or enjoy the company of someone whom you've just met. People think that I'm not friendly. That's not true. It takes me a while to warm up to people."

"You should get a few tips from my mom. She has no problems warming up to people."

"The expression can be used with things as well. The public hasn't warmed up to the new tax rules proposed by the Finance Minister."

"There are certain topics that I've never warmed up to."

"You sound dull. Not been getting enough sleep?"

"Slept like a log last night. I think that's the problem. I overslept."

"Go for a ride on your new motorcycle. I'm sure it'll clear away the cobwebs."

"Cobwebs? What cobwebs? Do I have cobwebs on my head?"

"No, no! The expression 'clear away the cobwebs', is frequently used in informal contexts to mean to do something to overcome your physical or mental tiredness."

"In my case, going out and getting some fresh air."

"That's right! You do something so that you're mentally alert again."

"In my case, it's usually a two-mile jog that clears away the cobwebs."

"Jogging is out of the question in my case. It's also possible to say, 'blow away the cobwebs'. Walking in the pouring rain, helped blow away the cobwebs."

"That's true. Tell me, how do you pronounce m..o..n..g..e..r."

"The 'mong' in the first syllable rhymes with 'young', 'sung' and 'hung', and the following 'er' sounds like the 'a' in 'china'. The word is pronounced 'MUNG-e' with the stress on the first syllable. Do you know what the word means?"

"No, I don't. I've only heard it being used in words like 'warmonger' and 'gossipmonger'."

"The word 'monger' began to be used in British English a long time ago to mean 'merchant' or 'trader'. For example, a person who sold fish was called a 'fishmonger' and someone who sold cheese was called..."

"She was probably called 'cheesemonger'."

"Exactly! Nowadays, the word is mostly used as a suffix, and it is normally used to show disapproval."

"According to the Opposition, the Chief Minister is a warmonger."

"That's better than being a doom-monger, I guess."

"Doom-monger? Does it mean someone who is constantly saying something bad is going to happen - and tries to get people to believe it."

"I guess you could say that!"

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Exigent:

demanding attention; requiring precise accuracy

Synonyms: insistent, instant, exacting

Usage: *He has became more exigent over his pronunciation.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/exigentpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈɛk.sɪ.ʤənt/, /ˈɛg.zɪ.ʤənt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

‘Bengaluru has potential to show the world the transformative power and the impact of design’

‘The design community here understood that design is a human-centered process that has the power to drive impact in the community and to transform the quality of life within the city,’ says Derome

INTERVIEW

Bertrand Derome & Jacob Mathew

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

‘Once a city develops a design culture, their implemented projects have more impact,’ says Derome . AFP

Bertrand Derome and Jacob Mathew

Earlier this year in July, Montreal-headquartered World Design Organisation (WDO) launched the World Design Protopolis (WDP), an initiative where the organisation would work with selected cities to come up with prototypes that would offer design-based solutions for developmental problems plaguing them. Bengaluru became the first city to be selected for the project.

Under the initiative, the WDO will work with various stakeholders including Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Srishti School of Design and the Association of Designers of India among others over a period of five years from 2023 to 2028.

The first World Design Protopolis Conclave was held in the city last week as part of the Unboxing Bengaluru Habba. Bertrand Derome, Managing Director at WDO and Jacob Mathew of Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology spoke to The Hindu on the sidelines of the event about the expected outcomes of the project and what the city stands to benefit from it.

What are your observations on the design community of Bengaluru?
Bertrand Derome: It is a very inspiring community and this is part of the reason why Bengaluru got the designation of the first World Design Protopolis (WDP). The design community here understood that design is a human-centered process that has the power to drive impact in the community and to transform the quality of life within the city of Bengaluru. They want to address some of the pressing issues such as water management, waste management, mobility and so on within the city.

They also had the support of the government. The BBMP and the Government of Karnataka have been backing the World Design Protopolis initiative in Bengaluru. They understand that the programme doesn’t demand more budget; It just asks to see some of the infrastructure investments are going to happen anyway through a design lens.

That way the Design Protopolis Project will help to build a business case that shows how, with the same resources, if you use design process, you can have more impact and improve the quality of the resources.

Can you give an example of the difference between approaching infrastructure projects through a design lens and otherwise?
Bertrand Derome: We see a lot of engineering-led solutions that technically do the work, but citizens don’t adopt them. But if you adopt a design process things improve.

In Cape Town for example, they have adopted a design-led user-centered project for implementation of new public transit lines. When they do that, they get much less resistance from the businesses on the line. Earlier they would complain that there would be less place for cars to come and shop in their shops. But now they are involved in the process and they can suggest ideal locations for stops that would cause less negative impact on their business. The users are involved to see what lines they need. This was the lines see better adoption, better retention of the community, and therefore more impact for the same investment.

All departments of the city - whether it’s the infrastructure, the housing department or the culture department - can use design process. They all benefit using this approach. Once a city develops a design culture, their implemented projects have more impact, drive more users around what they do, and have infrastructure that lasts for a longer time.

Which are the areas where Bengaluru could use a bit of design?
Bertrand Derome: Currently the WDP wants to target existing wards as well as explore what would be the blueprint and the guidelines for developing new districts. Many people living in the city are facing challenges. Empowering them and improving that region is as important as providing better orientation for future districts.

For the existing districts, it will be a collaborative work. If it’s just a top-down approach, it will not change behaviour of citizens. But if the citizens are involved in cleaning up neighbourhoods and identifying where the right infrastructures should be, then they become the guardians and the enablers of change.

And for the new regions, the learning from WDO’s network of cities will be valuable. There’s a lot of learning to do from the Chinese. They have built some new cities from scratch with a greater master plan. So is the case with some cities in Latin America and Africa.

One of the biggest challenges in Bengaluru is traffic and mobility. How would you be addressing that?
Bertrand Derome: Mobility, especially last mile mobility, is a very key part of WDP. Last year’s design week enabled multiple stakeholders to identify over 300 potential projects that could have value in different communities. From that in consultation with the local government, some of them have been prioritised, and mobility is one of them.

Jacob Mathew: The BBMP and BMTC have arranged now a set of buses that do a certain route around. The idea is to cover every Metro station, so that the coverage of one Metro touches the coverage of the next. Right now, they are looking at a star shape. We are going to assess that and see if that’s the best method. That’s one of the projects that has come up.

We are in discussions with multiple stakeholders such as DULT, BMRCL, BMTC, and private players such as Uber, Ola and Namma Yatri to try and bring them together to create transition transport hubs using the Metro as a staging point.

We have also been in talks with BBMP and they’d like to utilise the shadow spaces under the flyovers in the city. One of the ideas that have come up is to use those spaces for recharge stations.

Will WDP project also ensure the execution of these ideas?
Jacob Mathew: Execution is going to be done by government entities, private sector, civil society organizations, design professionals and professional bodies.

A lot of these projects can be also taken into education institutions as part of their pedagogy. Srishti is one of the partners of WDP and our job is to build the prototypes, evaluate them and handover ‘how to’ manuals to the government so that they can replicate or implement it.

I believe BBMP spend somewhere between ₹4500 to 8000 Crore a year in infrastructure building in Bengaluru. We are trying to see how we could help shape that spending.

Under WDP are there specific projects or prototypes that you have started identifying in Bengaluru?
Bertrand Derome: Out of the list of more than 300 potential projects that were identified in the Bengaluru Design Week last year, a short list of close to 30 projects have been selected for the first year of the initiative.

The whole WDP is a five-year program, but we want to be able to measure the impact after each year. So a set of initial projects have been identified for year-1 across different project categories. These include crafts making, heritage, technology, startups, circular economy, safety and health, infrastructure, last mile mobility, environment, climate, water, waste, energy, youth pedagogy and so on.

Part of the objective here is to build a business case through those prototypes and projects so that they inspire implementation of larger scale within the city.

But our objective as the WDO is to inspire the world. So, by giving Bengaluru the first designation of world design protopolis, we believe that the city has the potential to show the rest of the world the transformative power and the impact of design.

We’re here to collect all those case studies and show the rest of the world how we can transform each of those fields which makes up a city. A city is not just concrete houses and asphalt roads. We want to see how we can influence all those different elements to dream of a better city.

The community with the support of the government has the potential do those transformations and become a sustainable city economically, environmentally, socially and culturally.

Australian Built Environment delegation partners with Indian infrastructure companies

The Hindu Bureau

A 10-member Australian Built Environment industry delegation visited India last week as a part of Australia-India Business Exchange programme. The delegates represented and showcased Australian capabilities in water, urban development sectors. The visit was organised by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) in collaboration with the South Australian Government.

According to the release, the delegation met with India’s leading infrastructure companies, and relevant State government agencies across Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai between November 28 to December 1 to explore commercial partnership opportunities.

Australian niche capabilities around energy efficient water and sewerage treatment technologies, water recycling and re-use technologies, water treatment systems for rural drinking water supply, containerised desalination systems, flood management tools and techniques will have potential opportunities in India with multilateral funded and federal and state government projects, said the release.

Mr. Abdul Ekram, Trade and Investment Commissioner, Austrade South Asia, said, “The emphasis on creating high-quality and sustainable infrastructure and cities is a key priority for both India and Australia.”

“The Australian participation at Municipalika 2023 offered an excellent opportunity to showcase Australia’s world-class capabilities in the infrastructure sector.”

Australia - India bilateral relationship is at a historically high point, evidenced by the implementation of the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (AI-ECTA) in December 2022. “The delegation visit provided an opportunity to forge partnerships with the Indian Infrastructure businesses and leverage capabilities to deliver projects that are aligned with India’s ambitious sustainability and net zero goals,” he further added.

BLF, a community event where writers are the stars

There are no sponsors’ banners at BLF since the expenses are met by the community

ABOUT 500 WORDS

Suresh Menon

People attending the 12th Edition of BLF.

Sometimes it is difficult to take literature festivals too seriously. Jaipur, the daddy of them all, always has enough big-name writers to make up for the annoying presence of Bollywood stars and politicians (even if some of them can read). Sponsors are seen as necessary evils, and there is a certain amount of kowtowing to those who pay the piper.

The Bangalore Literature Festival (BLF) is unique. There are no sponsors’ banners since the expenses are met by the community. No politician inaugurates it, no corporator demands the best seats like he does at cricket matches, no organisers present themselves at the sessions. They prefer remaining in the background. The list of donors, Friends of the BLF, is a Who’s Who of the city; not all of them are books people, but all of them take pride in the city and contribute various amounts.

Every Litfest has its own stories. My favourite is from one where Vikram Seth went unrecognized. This is rather like Virat Kohli being anonymous at a cricket match, or Shahrukh Khan at a film festival. Sometimes it is difficult to take literature festivals too seriously.

Seth was passing through with a friend who pointed out there was a litfest happening. Let’s go, he said, and there he was. Standing by himself, looking slightly bemused when I spotted him. Soon he was explaining the etymology of the word ‘serendipity’ to my wife and wanting to know about her recent sculptures. His range of knowledge is mind boggling.

Litfest speakers have a pecking order. At the top of the hierarchy are the Nobel Laureates who get first class return fares for themselves and their entourage, limousines, local guides, all-paid trips to places of interest, and/or appearance money.

Then come the popular writers with a bunch of best-sellers against their names. This includes the mythologists too who make up a special set.

The experts - specialists in their field - as well as the controversialists make up the next lot. Sometimes the categories overlap. Booker and controversy, as in the case of Salman Rushdie, or popular and expert, as with Richard Dawkins. Indian language writers are hugely popular. Perumal Murugan, who writes in Tamil, is often the biggest draw, as he was at the BLF. He signs more books than most at the author sessions.

When the festival bookstore runs out of a book, and the authors see a queue waiting, they are not sure whether to rejoice or be upset. At one BLF session, Michael Brearley’s memoir Turning Over the Pebbles was sold out, but his other books including The Art of Captaincy were available.

I sat beside him signing my books. I am sure I signed a lot more than usual in the wake of his signing which carried me along.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 11, 1973

Urs’ Talks in Delhi on Ministry-changes

New Delhi, Dec. 10: The Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. Devaraj Urs to-day had meetings with the Congress President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma and the State Governor, Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadia here on the question of reconstitution of the Ministry following the offer of resignation by all the Ministers over the Basavalingappa affair.

The general expectation in political circles is that the issue will be sorted out in the next two days. The Central leaders are reported to have given Mr. Urs clear guidelines to act in this matter. Mr. Urs is reported to be weighing the pros and cons of dropping Mr. Basavalingappa. The possibility of a few more Ministers being dropped is also being talked about freely.

K.H. Patil Goes to Delhi

Bangalore, Dec. 10: The Agriculture Minister, Mr. K.H. Patil has left for Delhi. He is believed to have been summoned by the Chief Minister for consultation in regard to the projected reconstitution of his ministerial team following last week’s crisis sparked off by the anti Basavalingappa agitation in the State.

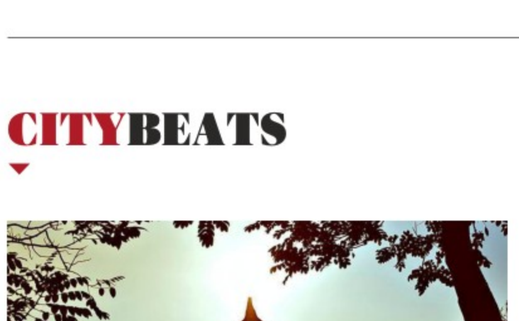
Unconfirmed reports say that at least two more Cabinet Ministers also had left for Delhi.

Mr. Patil, who is one of the strongmen in the Devaraj Urs Cabinet, left for Madras yesterday, on way to Delhi. In Madras, according to informed quarters, he had long discussions with Mr. H.N. Nanje Gowda, Minister of State for Major Irrigation (attached to the Chief Minister) on the political situation in the State.

CITYBEATS

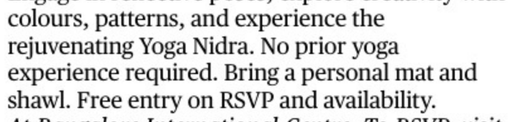
Embracing silence

DECEMBER 11
Join a mindfulness workshop led by SAMA. Engage in reflective poses, explore creativity with colours, patterns, and experience the rejuvenating Yoga Nidra. No prior yoga experience required. Bring a personal mat and shawl. Free entry on RSVP and availability.
At Bangalore International Centre. To RSVP, visit bangaloreinternationalcentre.org



Poets, assemble

DECEMBER 12
Celebrate the spoken word in English and Hindi. Poets and enthusiasts, aged 16 and above, are invited to share their creative expressions. Delve into the beauty of language and explore the depths of human emotion through poetry. Connect with the power of words.
At Lahe Lahe, Indiranagar. Tickets priced at ₹200 are available on bookmyshow.com.



Welcome the new year

DECEMBER 15 TO JANUARY 1
Indulge in heartwarming salads, delectable appetisers, comforting mains and decadent desserts. Highlights include field greens and avocado salad, croquettes with asparagus and brie, prawn cocktail, classic mushroom risotto. Starting from ₹380 plus taxes.
At Monkey Bar, Museum Road, Off MG Road. For inquiries, call 8655464500 or 8976590222.

All for one, one for all
Charlie Hall (centre) with members of The War on Drugs. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Looking forward to Udupi cuisine

Charlie Hall, drummer of the American indie-rock band, The War on Drugs, is excited about playing in Bengaluru for Bandland. Whether Bengalureans are fans of The War on Drugs, or have never heard of the band, Hall hopes the audience will be transported

Mini Anthikad Chhibber

While being a rock band seems to be all about sold out concert stadiums and every jolly excess, there is also hard work involved, including long days on the road, as any successful rocker will tell you. Charlie Hall, drummer of the American indie-rock band, The War on Drugs, however, finds touring a fun part of the job.

Speaking over a video call from Melbourne, Australia, Hall says, "Every night is a new musical conversation with the audience. There is a feedback loop between the performer and the audience. It is in the moment, happening right there, special and unique."

In Bandland
Bengaluru will have a chance of partaking of the magic as the Grammy-Award winning group, fronted by Adam Granduciel, will perform as part of Bandland. The two-day celebration of music brought to India's rock capital by BookMyShow Live, featuring British pioneers of heavy metal, Deep Purple, and Goo Goo Dolls amongst others, will be on December 16 and 17.

Touring, Hall says, has the added advantage of traveling the world. "We get to meet people, see different countries and how people live. We hopefully gain an appreciation and understanding for other cultures. I feel extremely fortunate and I'm grateful for every second of it and will never complain about 14-hour plane rides or whatever."

Pretty cool
It is a privilege, Hall says, to play music he loves, with people he loves, and share that with audiences. "The other thing about a live performance is that after not being able to share in big groups during the pandemic, to feel connected to something with thousands of other people is a pretty cool feeling."

Hall is excited about his first trip to India. "I've been interested in Indian classical music, especially Hindustani music, for a long time. I am excited about visiting Bangalore, both as a metropolis and for the nature. I have one whole day in the city with no travel or work. I have heard a lot about food in Bangalore. There is this vegetarian-based style of cooking, I don't know if I am saying this right, Udupi? which is prominent in Bangalore, that I would like to try."

Moved by the music
Whether Bengalureans are fans of The War on Drugs music, or have never heard of it, Hall hopes the audience will be moved. "Even if they've heard the records, hearing the band live will hopefully be exciting. The audience will be transported to a place where they can use their imagination, and feel a certain way."

Creating albums in a studio is a different beast, Hall says.

"You are digging deep within and creating something, that you don't always know what it is going look like. It is like you're using all these colours to create a picture, where the outline isn't even there yet. Sometimes you start with the outline and sometimes without. It works both ways."

It is fun to experiment when recording, says Hall. "You're still unsure of what you're doing. We are trying to create something new. That's the happy challenge of the studio. The tools of the studio are also cool. That's something that unifies the band. We're all interested in the recording process and in instruments. You are trying to try to find a sound out of an emotion, out of an instrument, a synthesiser, a drum, or whatever it is you're hitting, plucking, strumming or bowing. It's a joy to play with sound.

> You are trying to try to find a sound out of an emotion or whatever it is you're hitting, plucking, strumming or bowing. It's a joy to play with sound.
> **CHARLIE HALL**
> Drumer, The War on Drugs

Talking about how a song comes together, Halls says, "You are talking to the drummer, (laughs) but I could probably speak for Adam. In the case of our band, lyrics usually follow the melody. Some writers start with the lyrics, which they then put to music, and sometimes that has happened with us, but more often than not, the melody comes first."

Friends first
From its inception in 2005 in Philadelphia, The War on Drugs has undergone a lot of lineup changes. Kurt Vile, who formed the band with Granduciel, left to pursue a solo career after the release of the band's debut album, *Wagonwheel Blues*. "Friends collaborate with us on records and that goes into making The War on Drugs bigger than any one of us. It is all Adam's vision, which musicians come together to execute."

Even though the band is a professional operation, Hall says, the six-member band has been friends for so long that they are basically family.

"Everybody takes care of each other, and looks out for each other's families. We care about one another as people first. The band is, however, why we're all here, that's the job. We've known each other for 20 years and in that time, we've been through births of children, passing of parents and friends, weddings... every life experience there is."

Beat poet
About his fascination for percussion instruments, Hall laughs, saying, "I should probably know the answer to that! Before we had language, we had rhythm. We would bang on a piece of wood to signify something or bang in a certain rhythm to signify 'come home' or 'go away'. Drumming is the most original form of communication. So, maybe that has something to do with it, or I just like banging on things!" (laughs).

The multi-instrumentalist, producer, composer and songwriter, released his first solo album, *Invisible Ink* in May 2023. "It is something a couple of friends, including Dave (Hartley), the bass player from The War on Drugs, urged me to do. They pushed me out of my comfort zone as I've never written my own music before or recorded an album of my own music."

Sound document
The album, Hall says, started as a solitary experience and was fulfilling. "Once friends started to collaborate with me, it became this beautiful tapestry of colour, sound and ultimately, of friendship. So I now have this sound document of all these friendships, love and encouragement." Hall enjoyed the process so much that he is already working on the next album.

The War on Drugs has released five studio albums including the Grammy-Award winning *A Deeper Understanding* (2017) and the most recent, *I Don't Live Here Anymore* (2021). "What remains the same is the pursuit of Adam's vision. He has developed a sound that is recognisably his own. You hear something and think 'oh, that sounds like The War on Drugs.' And that's cool. The trick is to sound like The War on Drugs, but continue to evolve. That's what's it is always going to be – evolve and keep making honest music."

Bandland is on December 16 and 17 from 3pm at Embassy International Riding School.

Tickets are available on bookmyshow

A canvas for every emotion

Ruth Dhanaraj

An underlying sense of humour comes is what come through with an unwavering passion when talking with artist RB Murari. That, and a very strong sense of "art for art's sake".

"I'll start with the disclaimer that I'm not a commercial artist. The reason why I'm saying this is, once an artist gains confidence, they pick up a style and stick with it," says Murari, adding, "There are two perspectives at play here – what the artist wants to do and what is well-received in the market."

The artist who recently exhibited works from his Non-Objective series at Bengaluru's MKF Museum of Art, says, "I don't create for commercial value, but for the intrinsic value of my paintings."

That's true enough, because a look at his canvases reveal each one is quite distinct from the other. The bright, frenzied strokes on one, are starkly different from the sedate, sombre tones on another, while splashes of colour emerge from unexpected spaces on yet another. Almost all of his work is abstract, executed with acrylic on canvas.

"I paint when I'm angry, I paint when I'm happy and when I'm sad or heartbroken. Everyday I have a reason to stand at my canvas and paint. So that's all I do. I don't consider myself an expert. I'm still dabbling. I'm still exploring and I know that I have a long way to go."

Multi-faceted, multi-layered
RB Murari and creations from his Non Objective series. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Having said that, Murari goes on to share how he began painting at 14. "It wasn't because I was creative – I just didn't have anything else to do," he says, with absolute candour. "As a child, I was an introvert, but our home had a wonderful studio with huge canvases and lots of colours. I would sneak into it whenever my dad was away, painting with whatever I could lay my hands on."

Murari is the son of RB Bhaskaran and the grandson S Dhanapal, pioneers of the art movement in South India.

"I was not too athletic and apart from reading a few books, the only other thing I'd do was paint. Today, I wouldn't call it painting though, rather an exploring of the medium."

"My dad would return, look at what I had done and ask me about my medium or canvas, and I'd say I had used whatever was around. He wouldn't offer any pointers or criticism. I had no clue of the value of the materials I was using then – sometimes they were quite expensive. I was fearless and that has shaped my outlook on how I work today."

While Murari had a free run of his father's studio, holidays at his grandfather's place were a little more structured. "My grandfather had a huge studio and every evening around 30-40 children would show up wanting to learn from him, and I'd join them. He gave us all material to work with and made me learn like everyone else," he says, recalling one of his strongest childhood memories is waking up to a house full of artists and the smell of turpentine.

Murari continued to paint whenever he could and by the time he was 25, there were about 400-500 canvases of different sizes stacked up in his room. "I had seen my father consistently host shows irrespective of sales, so I never really thought of a show or of selling my work."

That was until Soli Darwala, founder of the iconic Sarala's Art Gallery (now Artworld) in Chennai, visited their home one evening. "My father asked him to see my work saying, "I don't know if its any good, but he certainly uses up a lot of material". Soli spent a couple of hours going through my work and when he left, he said, 'Someday you will make it big' and gave me ₹2000."

"That was an amazing sum of money 20 years ago! At the time, I was interning at a firm with a pay of ₹5000, so I was floored. When I was 27, Soli said I had beautiful collection of work and hosted my first solo show at Sarala's."

"That is how I got started. I don't paint to sell which has given me a huge edge. My father started seeing success in his mid-50s, so I was never in a rush either. Now, at age 45, I've been painting consistently for the past 30 years, whether I have shows or not.""The paintings I create are more about human emotions. Like everyone else, I've been depressed, super happy, frustrated and at peace. I've found I can depend on art; it heals you and makes you strong."

Check out the artist's works on his insta handle murari.rb.

Shaping artistic perspectives

Staff Reporter

In an exploration of sculptor Mrinalini Mukherjee's artistic journey, Asia Art Archive has meticulously digitised her personal archive, offering insight into her creative process that spans over four decades. Titled, Knot by knot, tier by tier, the archive takes its name from Mukherjee's lecture notes, emphasising the painstaking nature of her artistic endeavors.

Featuring Noopur Desai, a Researcher from Asia Art Archive in India, and Arnika Ahldag, Head of Exhibitions at MAP, the event promises an intriguing conversation. Noopur will delve into the context of documenting and digitising Mukherjee's archive, shedding light on the research and archiving methods employed over the two-year period.

The discussion aims to uncover lesser-known facets of Mukherjee's work through extensive photo-documentation, capturing her artistic evolution and visits to significant art historical sites.

As Noopur and Arnika explore the digitisation process, they will also address various lines of inquiry that emerged, touching on themes of artistic research, the art-making process, interconnected art histories, and the afterlives of materials in the archive. Attendees can anticipate a unique case study highlighting two recent iterations of the archival exhibition held in New Delhi and Hong Kong.

This session, scheduled for December 14 at 6pm in the Mazumdar Shaw Auditorium on the first floor of MAP Bengaluru, is a part of the larger programming for the exhibition 'Visible/Invisible: Representation of Women in Art through the MAP Collection.'

Open to audiences aged 18 and above, the event is free, but registration is required.

For more information about the program and registration, visit map-india.org.

‘Cauvery basin lost nearly 12,850 sq. km of green cover’

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

Natural vegetation on nearly 12,850 sq. km of land in the Cauvery basin was lost in the 50 years between 1965 to 2016, according to a recent paper published by scientists and researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. Karnataka has lost much more than any other State in the basin. It accounts for three-fourths of the lost cover, while Tamil Nadu’s share is around one-fifth, the study adds.

Pointing out that natural-vegetation cover went down by around 46% all these years, the paper, authored by T.V. Ramachandra, Vinay S., Bharath S., and Bharath H. Aithal, stated that the quantum of reduction of dense vegetation was 35% (6,123 sq. km) and that of degraded vegetation, 63% (6,727 sq. km).

Areas that suffered adverse changes in the extent of forest cover include the Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park and the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary. In respect of the Bannerghatta National Park, the moist deciduous forest area, which was about 50% in 1973, stood at 28.5% in 2015 due to “anthropogenic pressure” on the National Park and its environs.

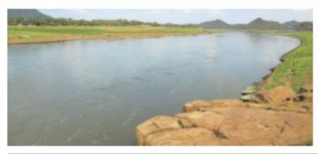
Taking a historical view of the growth in the cropping area in the basin, the paper, titled “Cauvery River: Land Use Dynamics Biodiversity & Hydrological Status,” said that in respect of Tamil Nadu, the extent of area under irrigation rose from 6,556 sq. km in 1928 to 20,233 sq. km now and in the case of Karnataka, it was from 1,193 sq. km to 8,497 sq. km. Consequently, the water demand of the two States increased. It added that land-use analysis showed that in 73.5% of the catchment, agriculture and horticulture constituted the dominant activity.

Shrinking greenery

Pattern of natural vegetation cover in the Cauvery basin over the years

(in sq. km)

Year	Karnataka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu	Total
1965	17,072.81	1,043.64	10,077.78	28,194.23
2016	7,408.50	764.16	7,172.42	15,345.08
Loss	9,664.31	279.48	2,905.36	12,849.15



Source: “Cauvery river: Land use dynamics biodiversity & hydrological status,” a paper authored by T. V. Ramachandra, Vinay S., Bharath S. and Bharath H. Aithal, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

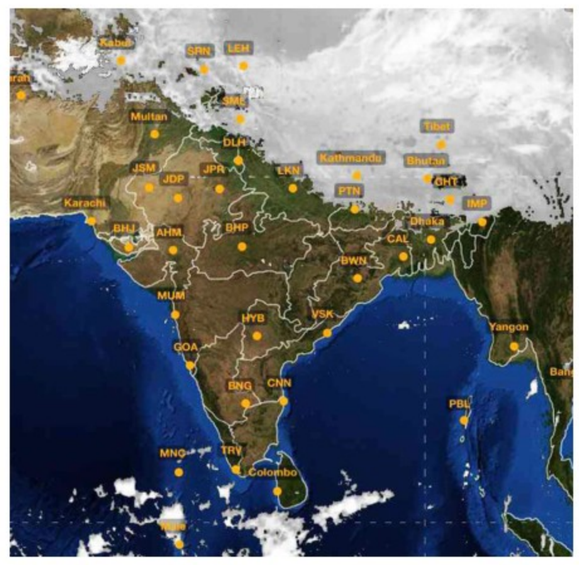
Inefficient water use

The paper identified “inappropriate” cropping patterns, inefficient use of water, adoption of multi-season water-intensive crops, “unsustainable” mining of river sand, and the decline in community participation in watershed management as problems that characterised the basin.

To remedy the situation, the paper called for the integrated management of the catchment with an interlinked system of natural resources; restrictions on “large-scale water-intensive” cash crops, monoculture and over-exploitation of groundwater; enrichment of the catchment with native species; promotion of organic farming; setting up effluent treatment plants; and ensuring zero discharge from industries.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorm and gusty winds with a speed of 30-40 kmph very likely at isolated places over Kerala and Mahe. Dense Fog very likely in isolated pockets over Assam & Meghalaya and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	23.2	16.2	Kozhikode	—	34.5	26.0
Ahmedabad	—	30.2	16.2	Kurnool	—	33.2	20.6
Aizawl	—	23.2	17.2	Lucknow	—	24.4	11.1
Allahabad	—	25.9	12.4	Madurai	2.0	32.6	24.1
Bengaluru	—	29.0	20.2	Mangaluru	42.0	32.8	23.6
Bhopal	—	26.4	11.9	Mumbai	—	32.4	22.8
Bhubaneswar	—	28.9	18.2	Mysuru	—	30.0	23.0
Chandigarh	—	22.3	9.2	New Delhi	—	23.1	8.0
Chennai	—	30.4	25.4	Patna	—	25.1	13.1
Coimbatore	—	31.0	23.2	Port Blair	—	31.0	25.2
Dehradun	—	23.8	7.4	Puducherry	2.1	29.2	24.7
Gangtok	—	13.5	9.4	Pune	—	32.5	19.0
Goa	—	34.0	24.6	Raipur	—	28.5	15.5
Guwahati	—	25.6	16.0	Ranchi	—	22.2	12.4
Hubballi	—	32.0	22.0	Shillong	—	17.8	7.0
Hyderabad	—	29.3	16.3	Shimla	—	14.3	6.1
Imphal	—	24.7	13.2	Srinagar	—	10.8	-4.4
Jaipur	—	25.8	11.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.2	25.6
Kochi	0.2	32.8	26.6	Tiruchi	—	32.1	24.0
Kohima	2.0	15.2	7.4	Vijayawada	—	30.6	21.6
Kolkata	—	25.0	17.3	Visakhapatnam	—	30.4	22.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	—	47	20	91	96	
Bengaluru	4	31	52	70	122	
Chennai	—	34	45	35	42	
Delhi	8	97	63	369	262	
Hyderabad	8	102	40	150	140	
Kolkata	9	8	32	225	161	
Lucknow	9	43	49	229	146	
Mumbai	13	71	34	179	158	
Pune	—	21	37	228	136	
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	—

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Begusarai, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 372 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ariyalur, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 17

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Binoy Viswam nominated CPI State secretary

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

A meeting of the Communist Party of India (CPI) State executive, chaired by the party’s national general secretary, D. Raja, in Kottayam on Sunday, nominated senior party leader Binoy Viswam as secretary of the party’s State committee in Kerala.

Mr. Viswam, a member of the CPI national secretariat, will take charge as soon as the party State council, which is slated to meet on December 28, ratifies the State executive’s decision.

Addressing the media, Mr. Raja announced that the nomination of Mr. Viswam had been unanimous.

Remaining 4 Congress guarantees in next 100 days: Telangana Deputy CM

The main agenda of the Congress government is creating wealth and distributing it among people, says Vikramarka, while adding that the government would accord top priority to address issues related to house sites, *Podu* land, and irrigation

P. Sridhar
KHAMMAM

People’s mandate for the Congress is a slap on the face of those who questioned the six poll guarantees of the Congress,Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Sunday, taking a dig at Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders who, during the recent electioneering, lambasted the promises saying they had no “warranty”.

The people’s government of the Congress fulfilled two of its total six guarantees in just two days of taking charge in Telangana, he said while addressing the media at the District Congress Committee office in Khammam on Sunday. “It will implement the remaining four guarantees in the next 100 days,” he said.

Rousing reception

Earlier, Mr. Vikramarka, along with his ministerial colleagues Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Tummala Nageswara Rao, arrived to a grand welcome at the party office here on Sunday.

They were accorded a rousing reception by the rank and file of the party on their arrival at Nayakangudam toll plaza on Sunday morning as part of their maiden visit to the district after being sworn in as ministers in the new Congress government.

Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka

Mr. Vikramarka asserted that the main agenda of the Congress government is creating wealth and distributing it among people. “Our government would work for the well-being of all and all-round development of Telangana,” he said.

Free travel in TSRTC buses for women was launched as part of its efforts to empower women. The health insurance coverage under the Rajiv Aarogyasri scheme was raised to ₹10 lakh, he claimed.

He also said that the government would accord top priority to address issues related to house sites, *Podu* land, irrigation and other issues concerning people.

He thanked the people of Khammam district for ensuring the landslide victory of the Congress and promised to make people active partners in Telangana’s development.

Bus flagged off

The Deputy Chief Minister, along with the two Ministers, flagged off a TSRTC bus in Khammam on Sunday.

Later, they visited Palvancha and Bhadrachalam towns in Bhadradrai Kothagudem district. At Palvancha, they attended a felicitation meeting of CPI State secretary Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao.

THE HINDU

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Teacher, teach thyself

Ramya Venkatraman

The good news is that there are now increasingly diverse pathways for teachers who can work on building their own skills

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

When people talk about the future of teaching, they often refer to how teaching and learning in a classroom should be more application-oriented, more aligned with the future of work, more collaborative, and so on; i.e. what should be taught and how it should be taught.

However, we should talk a lot more about the future of teaching as a profession. Why it is a field that young people joining the workforce should start paying attention to? What are the less-understood opportunities in this domain?

Common conversations about teaching as a profession refer to the importance of high-quality teaching for students and for society at large and, therefore, the need to empower teachers with training, technology, and support. But what is commonly overlooked is how this could be an exciting career for teachers, how their role, financial rewards, and recognition could grow.

Opportunities available

While we are increasingly finding a willingness among employers, both private and government, to create an environment that rewards great teachers with professional growth opportunities, teachers – like many other professionals – need to figure out how to build their own skills, what they need to learn for today and the future and proactively take up assessments that help identify this. This involves selecting resources and finding out what works for their style of learning.

This naturally leads students and young professionals to the question: what are the professional growth opportunities available and what will they look like in the future? Earlier, the idea of joining and retiring as a grade English teacher failed to provide an appealing career trajectory. Transitioning from teaching Class 6 to Class 12 contradicts educational research, which highlights the specialisation of early childhood, primary and secondary teaching. Such transitions only create the illusion of professional growth.

However, the good news is that there are now increasingly diverse pathways for teachers. Large private school chains allow teachers to become a subject lead, coach, create content and even do stints across these roles to figure out one’s interests. While single-school establishments may have fewer paths, they increasingly offer supplemental roles, including content creation, assessment design, lesson planning, and mentoring ... well beyond the ‘after-school tuition’ that was for long the only supplemental role for a teacher.

Governments are increasingly aware of the need to recognise merit in teaching. In India, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also advocates this. Multiple state governments including Haryana, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh are already formally using certification tests to reward teachers. In some cases, this even extends to teacher selection and promotion to coveted roles. In today’s highly interconnected world, teaching is taking on a global dimension. Indian teachers have a crucial role to play in addressing the teacher shortages, especially in STEM fields. Post-COVID, some of these opportunities remain online, making them logistically easier.

What to do

So, if teaching is going to be coming a thriving global profession, how does one get ready for it? Many of these opportunities are increasingly being linked to a high-quality certification, based on a strong competency framework. This acts as a currency for teachers and offer employers a globally recognised view of a candidate’s skills.

Such certifications also form the foundation for tailored skill-building. For instance, a teacher can learn from their competency test that they need to improve in lesson planning, especially in project-based lessons. This exemplifies the level of personalisation possible in training and learning for teachers.

Going forward, the future of teaching can be seen as an ecosystem that focuses on teaching as a profession, creating the right incentives and providing access to a wide range of opportunities through a strong competency-based certification. It is time that students and young professionals who are interested in teaching but wonder whether it is a valid career start to understand these opportunities and get ready for them.

The writer is the Founder and CEO, Centre for Teacher Accreditation (CENTA).

LAMP Fellowships

Applications for the next cohort of the Legislative Assistants to Members of Parliament (LAMP) Fellowship, by PRS Legislative Research are currently open.

The Fellowship enables fellows to work with and be mentored by a Member of Parliament and provide research inputs for various parliamentary interventions.

The Fellowship runs from June to April covering all three sessions of the Parliament.

Eligibility: Indian graduates under 25

Deadline: Dec 23

https://prsindia.org/lamp

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Bad precedent

The expulsion of Mahua Moitra is ominous for parliamentary democracy

The expulsion of Trinamool Congress Member of Parliament Mahua Moitra from the Lok Sabha by a hurried voice vote on December 8, based on a report of the Ethics Committee of the House, is bad in form and substance. It was not, however, surprising. By a 6:4 majority, including the vote of a suspended Congress MP, the committee recommended her expulsion, holding her guilty of 'unethical conduct,' 'breach of privilege' and 'contempt of the House.' These were charges raised by a Bharatiya Janata Party MP, who was in turn depending on the statement of Ms. Moitra's estranged partner. The committee cited in its report a precedent of the expulsion of 11 MPs in 2005 for a cash-for-query sting operation by a news platform. There was video evidence that established a strong case then, unlike the charges against Ms. Moitra. She shared her login credentials with businessman Darshan Hiranandani to upload Parliament questions, a fact she herself admitted. The committee conceded in its report that it had no proof of cash exchanges and its report called for "legal, intensive, institutional and time-bound investigation", into that aspect. Nevertheless, it was emphatic in calling for her expulsion, and even labelled the sharing of her login credentials a criminal act.

The links suggested between Ms. Moitra's Parliament questions and the business interests of the Hiranandani group are frivolous. For instance, a question on steel prices or India's trade relations with Bangladesh is of interest to numerous business groups and consumers. The committee said it acknowledged the fact that several MPs share their login credentials with others, but went on to make a laboured case that Ms. Moitra had endangered national security. The argument that MPs have access to documents on the Parliament portal that are not in the public domain is a stretched one. In fact, there is no good reason to keep draft Bills secret. Bill drafts are meant for public circulation and debate before being brought to Parliament for discussion and voting. That there is very little of that happening these days is a sad commentary on parliamentary democracy. The report of the Ethics Committee also faced the same fate. The 495 page report was tabled and voted on the same day, rejecting the appeal of Opposition MPs for a more detailed discussion once Members had the time to read it in detail. The precedent that the majority in Parliament can expel an Opposition member on a dubious charge is ominous for parliamentary democracy. The expulsion of Ms. Moitra is a case of justice hurried and buried.

Falling behind

Dissonance in RBI's inflation messaging betrays risks in its policy posture

The Monetary Policy Committee's decision to hold benchmark interest rates level, while raising its forecast for full-year GDP growth by 50 basis points and flagging food price shocks-induced volatility in inflation, is replete with the risk of policymakers falling behind the curve on anchoring inflation expectations. Notably, after observing that "uncertainties in food prices along with unfavourable base effects are likely to lead to" headline inflation quickening in November-December, and that "recurring food price shocks are impeding the ongoing disinflation process", the MPC has rather surprisingly opted to keep the RBI's repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for a fifth straight bi-monthly meeting. To be sure, retail inflation has moderated since the MPC last met in early October, with the headline reading softening by almost two percentage points, from August's 6.83% to 4.87% in October. But, by the MPC's own reckoning, that moderation may be fleeting, as price gains accelerate yet again in November and December, and with volatility in oil prices and financial markets, amid heightened global uncertainty, there are added risks to the outlook on prices. The RBI's latest 'Households' Inflation Expectations Survey', undertaken in November, reveals that most households expect faster inflation in the three-months-ahead and one-year-ahead time horizons, and at median levels of 9.1% and 10.1%, respectively, unequivocally underlining the fact that price gain expectations are still far from durably anchored.

The dissonance in messaging from the central bank is exemplified in the MPC's decision to upgrade its projection for real GDP growth in the fiscal year ending in March 2024 to 7%, from 6.5% as recently as in October. For this, it cites robust investment, besides continued strengthening in manufacturing, buoyancy in construction and a gradual rural recovery that it sees helping 'brighten the prospects of household consumption'. If the RBI's cumulative 250 basis points increase in the benchmark interest rate since May 2022 through to February 2023 and the subsequent retention of the 6.5% rate have not damped the growth impulses barring consumption, then it would indicate that consumption is still struggling to gain traction largely because, as Deputy Governor Michael D. Patra observed at the MPC's last meeting, "people are not increasing discretionary spending in view of high inflation". This seems to be borne out in the RBI's November round of its bi-monthly 'Consumer Confidence Survey', which showed consumers retained negative sentiments on both current and future price conditions. With policymakers only too well aware that sans price stability, as Mr. Patra noted, "the benefits of expanding GDP and employment will be frittered away by the erosion of purchasing power", the MPC has its task cut out.

Calibrating a strategy for India's future growth

C. Rangarajan

is former Chairman, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council and former Governor, Reserve Bank of India

D.K. Srivastava

is Chief Policy Adviser, EY India, and former Director, Madras School of Economics

India's growth in 2023-24 is currently projected by the Reserve Bank of India at 7% while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have pegged it at 6.3%. With a growth of 7.8% and 7.6% in the first two quarters of 2023-24, respectively, and a broad-based recovery in the second quarter, India is likely to realise the RBI's currently projected growth of 7% in this fiscal year. In the medium term, the IMF has projected an annual growth of 6.3% up to 2028-29. India's future growth strategy needs to be calibrated in view of the changing global conditions.

There is a movement towards deglobalisation. Many ongoing geopolitical conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas war have created a climate of sanctions, leading to breaks in supply chains as well as disruptions in international settlements due to non-access to systems such as SWIFT for the sanctioned countries. World real GDP growth has also fallen, leading to reduced demand for global exports. Many countries including India want to reduce their dependence on imported petroleum due to supply uncertainties and price volatility.

In India's case, exports experienced a sharp acceleration in the share of GDP during 2003-04 to 2008-09. This peaked at 25% in 2013-14. In 2022-23, it was 22.8%, having fallen to a trough of 18.7% in 2019-20 and 2020-21. The erstwhile export-led growth strategy may not be available to India any more. It has to evolve its own future growth strategy.

Investment rate in medium term

India will have to rely relatively more on domestic growth drivers. To achieve and sustain a 7% plus real growth in particular, domestic savings will be critical. We estimate the nominal saving rate in 2022-23 to be about 29%. One area of concern relates to the recently noted fall in the household sector's savings in financial assets which declined to 5.1% of GDP in 2022-23 from an average of 7.8% during the pre-COVID-19 period of 2015-16 to 2019-20 – a fall of 2.7% points. This fall consisted of 2.2% points of increase in change in gross household financial liabilities and 0.5% points fall in change in gross household financial assets. These changes may be temporary post-COVID-19 responses.

However, if these trends persist, it will pose a significant risk to India's growth potential since it is the surplus household sector financial savings that become available to the government and the corporate sector to draw resources from to meet their investment demand in excess of their own savings.

> Raising the savings and investment rates, improving the skill acquisition of young entrants to the labour market and adopting an employment-friendly technology mix must be the focus areas

Savings are converted into gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) by adding net capital inflows and deducting change in stocks, valuables, and discrepancies. The estimated nominal investment rate, that is GFCF relative to GDP was 29.2% in 2022-23. However, the deflator of capital goods is lower than that of all goods. The movement of the relative deflator of capital goods is somewhat volatile. Using the five-year average of the relative magnitude of the two deflators, the nominal investment rate of nearly 29% would provide a real investment rate of about 33%. This needs to be increased by 2% points to provide investible resources amounting to 35% of GDP, enabling a growth of 7% at an Incremental Capital-Output Ratio (ICOR) of 5, which was its value in 2022-23. If the ICOR is lower, achievable growth would be higher.

Strategising enhanced employment

India would find itself in a unique position in the next three decades with a large potentially employable population seeking jobs in the presence of progressively more labour-saving innovations and technologies. According to United Nations population projections, the share of India's working age population is projected to peak at 68.9% in 2030 while its overall dependency ratio would be at its lowest at 31.2%. These patterns call for increased allocation of resources for training and skilling India's growing working age population.

Employment growth is critically dependent on GDP growth and the structure of output. The growth rate of the working age population is projected to progressively fall from 1.2% in 2023-24 to 0% in 2048-49. In 2022-23, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the worker population ratio, showing the number of employed persons in the population above 15 years of age, increased to 51.8% from 44.1% in 2017-18, depicting an average increase of 1.5% points per year. Going forward, non-agricultural growth will have to be high enough to absorb labour released from agriculture which is estimated at 45.8% in 2022-23 by the PLFS. It should also be able to absorb the labour-substituting impact of new technology. Facilitating absorption of productivity-enhancing technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Generative AI would add to overall growth.

India has committed to certain targets to reduce carbon emissions in view of global climate concerns. In the COP26 Summit, in 2021, India had committed to reducing total carbon emissions by one billion tonnes between 2021 to 2030 and achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2070. India's own initiatives include the Green Grids Initiative (GGI) and One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG). It is also placing an emphasis on the use of electric vehicles and ethanol-based and hydrogen fuels. Climate-promoting technological changes may reduce the potential growth rate. This adverse impact can be minimised by emphasising service sector growth which is relatively climate friendly.

Fiscal responsibility

Adhering to fiscal responsibility targets is also critical to sustain growth. In recent years, there has been considerable slippage in achieving the fiscal responsibility targets. To sustain growth close to its potential, it is important to ensure that the combined fiscal deficit and debt to GDP ratios are brought down to 6% and 60%, respectively, so that the burden of interest payments relative to revenue receipts is kept within acceptable limits. This would enable achieving a balance or surplus on the revenue account of the central and State governments, which in turn would reduce government dissavings and augment the overall savings rate of the economy.

In the next two years, a growth rate of 6.5% seems feasible. This represents, partially, a recovery from the low growth rate in the COVID-19 period. Over the medium term, India's growth performance will be adversely affected by many factors, both domestic and external. Raising the savings and investment rates, improving the skill acquisition of the young entrants to the labour market and adopting a technology mix which is employment friendly are issues on which the country must focus to achieve a growth rate of 7% to 7.5%.

The views expressed are personal

No more hot air about air pollution

Binoy Viswam

a Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament, is a member of the CPI National Secretariat. He has been nominated as Secretary of the CPI's State Committee in Kerala

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his colleagues in the Bharatiya Janata Party must have forgotten what they have said about the menace of air pollution in their manifesto for the 2014 elections. To brush up their memory, here is a quote from page 36 of the said manifesto: "The present generation has to make this world a better place to live. A better place not only for us, but for our future generations as well. We have to nurture the environment, institutions, people, resources and amenities... We will take Climate Change mitigation initiatives with all seriousness and work with the global community and institutions in this regard. We will: (do) Ecological Audit of projects and pollution indexing of cities and townships will be done on a scientific basis. Pollution control mechanisms will be set up on priority basis".

Only promises

After ruling for five years, in the election in 2019, the BJP proclaimed its pollution control commitment in the following words, in Point 21 of the 2019 manifesto: "We have evolved technologically better strategies and devices to map the level of pollution in cities and rivers and have taken effective steps to reduce the level of pollution in major cities, including the national capital. We will convene the National Clean Air Plan into a Mission and we will focus on 102 most polluted cities in the country. Through concerted action, we will reduce the level of pollution in each of the mission cities by at least 35% over the next years." Living in Delhi and breathing its polluted air, they should have understood by now that the promises still remain the same – as only promises.

In the million-plus (population) cities where the National Clean Air Programme is supposed to have done miracles, people still experience tortured breathing in the aftermath of profit-motivated growth for which the BJP is full of self-praise. When IQAir released the World Air Quality Report 2022, 39 Indian cities were named in the list of the 50 most polluted cities in the world. The report said that air pollution is the second biggest risk factor for disease in India. In 2019, a *Lancet* study found that nearly 1.6 million deaths in India could be attributed to air pollution, comprising 18% of the total deaths in the country.

> If the government is serious about the fight for clean air, it should ensure that the issue is discussed in the winter session of Parliament

Disease burden

India's air pollution is solely responsible for the highest number of respiratory diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (50% of all cases in the world are in India), asthma (13% of global burden is in India) and rising cases of cancer and stroke throughout the country.

The result is that people in these cities have a reduced life expectancy, of nine years, at the present stage. Even the World Economic Forum reports that the cost India pays in terms of air pollution is ₹7.91 lakh crore annually.

While the National Clean Air Programme that BJP promised in its manifesto was officially launched in 2019, comprising 131 most polluted cities, due to the utter negligence of the government, the programme has ended up being a non-starter. When the G-20 was hosted by India with fanfare, the Modi government boasted that India, the 'Vishwaguru', was ahead in every developmental yardstick. But the reality is evident to all: the pathetic living conditions of our people. The adapted safety standards of the World Health Organization have said that the annual average concentrations of PM2.5 should not exceed 5 ug/m3. As India is nowhere near the safety zone, the people are helpless victims of the pollution crisis.

Lured by power and guided by corporate greed, the party in power has never cared to revisit the promises made to the people. Let the country have a look at the amendments made by the Modi government in the forest and environment-related legislations. They were all meant for the destruction of forests and environment; not for their protection. The Great Nicobar Development Plan is an assault on the richness of the biodiverse abundance of the islands, with a disastrous impact on the air, water and environment conditions of India as a whole. The Central Vista project of the BJP government, which has been boasted about a lot, has caused unimaginable damage to the air of the capital. The ₹20,000-crore project has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of trees in Lutyens' Delhi. To ensure the Central Vista Project, the government blatantly disregarded building laws in the country and found shelter in the outdated Government Buildings Act of 1899! Pollution from the indiscriminate demolitions (recently, 80,000 tonnes of debris were heaped in Noida) and carbon dioxide emissions from an ever-growing number of vehicles (over 3.38 million private cars in 2021 in Delhi) cannot be ignored. Yet, discussions on air pollution by the government and the political forces behind it always revolve around stubble burning and 'irresponsible' farmers.

This greed of the capital along with its market-controlled path of development at the expense of people, brings to memory what Karl Marx wrote in the first chapter of the Communist Manifesto in 1848. He characterised the bourgeois government as the "executive committee for managing the general affairs of the capitalists". That statement remains true in the era of LPG, i.e., Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation.

Practices worth examining

The existing and alarming situation of air pollution in the country warrants an urgent proactive plan on the part of the government to protect life expectancy. The government should understand that people and their lives are of paramount importance; not the profits of the government cronies. If the government is serious, it should find the time to discuss in the winter session of Parliament the severe crisis caused by the frightening rate of air pollution. There are various worthy practices worth emulating such as "wind path forests" in different countries and India's own concept of "Social Forestry". This is the time to act, and to give hope to the people. The Prime Minister should convene an all-party meeting urgently to set the ground for India's fight for ensuring safe air and environment.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The deluge in Chennai

You do not need experts to tell us that Chennai's flooding woes result from its mind-boggling growth created over its extensive water bodies. But the growth that has happened cannot be dismantled. So, the experts, whoever they are, must talk about solutions to avoid flooding. Storm water drains are not a total, exclusive and fool-proof solution. They can be easily overstressed and become the source of flooding. They must be supported by rain water absorption systems and provisions that will push at least half the rainfall into the water table quickly, in a few hours. There has to be an emphasis on rain water harvesting with a good design from IIT Madras and even international experts.

M. Balakrishnan,
Bengaluru

The Government of Tamil Nadu should take serious note of the scrupulous observations and recommendations of the CAG's Performance Audit Report on "Flood Management and Response in Chennai and its Suburban areas" which was conducted after the 2015 deluge and put out in the public domain.

M.B. Sampathkumar,
Chennai

Only 34% of the roads in Chennai are capable of draining water. It is estimated that about 45 km of storm water drains (SWD) are non-existent/missing. Of the SWD maps published by the Greater Chennai Corporation, 86 out of the 200 wards are non-existent, which includes Manali, Thiruvotriyur, Sholinganallur and Perungudi. In many cases, SWD alignment is improper. Levelling and benchmarks, the fundamentals of civil engineering, have been ignored. The area in which there are four river basins in Chennai does not have integrated SWDs. This is purely a technical problem to be solved by the technocrats and engineers.

J.R.D. Rajakumar,
Chennai

On Nehru

Remarks were made in Parliament recently by the Home Minister about the 'greatest blunders of Nehru'. While the Home Minister's references to the two events are factually correct, it would have been more appropriate to describe the two actions as errors of judgement instead of blunders keeping in mind Nehru's strong patriotism and his sufferings by way of a long imprisonment. Despite his many errors of judgement, Nehru was the darling of the nation. He loved his country and countrymen so much that it was fully reciprocated by the people.

V. Gopalan,
Chennai

Leelavathi

The passing of Leelavathi has robbed the film industry of a charismatic, versatile and brilliant actor. Besides her contributions to cinema, she committed herself to several social causes. Her legacy will continue to live on.

N.J. Ravi Chander,
Bengaluru

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

The hypocrisy of Western democracy

Nissim Mannathukkaren

is Professor, Dalhousie University, Canada, and posts @nmannathukkaren

With a staggering 17,000 Gazans already killed since October 7, Palestine is seeing one of its greatest tragedies. The West has shockingly enabled this in various ways: it has supported Israel's "right to defend" by reducing Palestine to Hamas; conflated critiques of Zionism and the Israeli state with anti-Semitism; weaponised the Holocaust; and attempted to erase history (the White House described Hamas' attack as "unprovoked").

No freedom of expression

Western societies that profess democracy have also scotched their own people's freedom of expression – not with official diktats but by demonising and targeting citizens speaking in support of Palestine. Western universities have become the major ground for this. In Ivy League institutions such as Harvard and Columbia, the private details of students who signed pro-Palestine letters have been made public. Prominent Jewish donors (and supporters of the Israeli state) have withdrawn funding from universities including Harvard and Pennsylvania alleging inaction against anti-Semitism and anti-Israel speeches on campuses (note: 45% of Harvard's revenue of $5.8 billion in 2022 came from philanthropy). University administrations in North America put out official statements condemning only Hamas. And scholars working on Palestinian freedom have faced various unwritten codes of harassment.

The media has been key in framing the Palestine-Israel conflict for Western citizens for 75 years. The fundamental problem here, with a few honourable exceptions, has been the overwhelming bias towards Israel. As 1,200 academics and educators from North America noted in a recent open letter, the historical roots of the violence as well as the illegality of Israeli occupation in international law are not discussed. Words such as apartheid, ethnic cleansing, genocidal intent, settler colonialism – used by scholars, human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch, prominent Israeli rights group B'Tselem, and the United Nations, to describe Israeli actions – go missing in discourse.

The liberal face of institutions like Hollywood now stands exposed. The initial lack of response to the Hamas attack by unions such as the Writers Guild of America led to a backlash. Then, about 700 people from the entertainment industry signed an open letter declaring their support for Israel. On the other hand, pro-Palestinian voices chose to remain anonymous in their letters to avoid being doxxed or blacklisted as anti-Semitic. Some actors, artist agents, and magazine editors have had to face professional consequences.

The most egregious actions have taken place in Europe, the supposed bastion of free speech. Countries including the U.K., France, Germany, and Italy emphatically declared their support for Israel and imposed various kinds of bans (some of them blanket) on pro-Palestinian protests. Austria, for instance, banned a pro-Palestinian demonstration citing the inclusion of the phrase "from the River to the Sea" in invitations, as a justification. Ironically, this is the same "free" Europe where blasphemy laws are abolished (Denmark, Sweden) and caricatures of religion are allowed (France) and have led to burnings of the Koran and cartoons on Prophet Muhammad.

There is no denying that there are inflammatory positions, fake news articles, and also celebration of brutality on both sides of the divide, all of which are not conducive to reasoned debates. If incidents of racism towards Palestinians/Arabs have increased, so has anti-Semitism.

But the root cause of Western complicity in Palestinian oppression lies in colonialism and imperialism, which is masked by the façade of liberal democracy. Democracy has seemingly thrived in the West, which has perpetuated colonialism and imperialism elsewhere. But even those democratic freedoms at home seem under threat now.

An exposé

The way out of the complicity in Israel's colonisation of Palestine can only be through an exposé of the hypocrisies of Western democracy. This has been undertaken by those on the margins of this democracy. For instance, the Canadian government-appointed National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was forced to acknowledge that the Canadian state has perpetrated genocide against the Indigenous people. There is resistance to the war in Palestine, not just by Arabs and Palestinians but also by Jewish dissenters. The horrors unfolding in Gaza are also changing opinions. Mainstream Western media has given more space to Palestinian stories this time, even if they are not enough. In recent U.S. opinion polls, almost 70% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning voters under 35 years disapproved of President Joe Biden's support to Israel.

As the Israeli carnage in Gaza resumes, the West has to listen to people such as Israel-born Omer Bartov, one of the world's foremost Holocaust scholars, who, while rightly expressing empathy with the Jewish victims of Hamas' heinous war crimes, warned of genocide and asked leaders and scholars "to publicly warn against the rage- and vengeance-filled [Israeli] rhetoric that dehumanises the population of Gaza..."

As another Holocaust scholar Raz Segal asserted, "No justice is possible... without a truthful reckoning of how we got here." The West must acknowledge its own monstrous role in getting Palestine to this precipice.

The root cause of Western complicity in Palestinian oppression lies in colonialism and imperialism

Promises and financial constraints

It will be a herculean task for the Congress government to meet its commitments

STATE OF PLAY

M. Rajeev
rajeev.madabhushi@thehindu.co.in

The new Congress government in Telangana is set to face an uphill task in fulfilling the six guarantees that the party made to the farmers, women, and youth of the State during its election campaign.

For instance, the Mahalakshmi scheme guarantees women ₹2,500 every month, gas cylinders for ₹500 (nearly half the current price), and free travel in public buses. Also, on the lines of the Kalyana Lakshmi scheme of the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government, the Mahalakshmi scheme promises ₹1 lakh each and 10 gms of gold to women from economically weaker sections for marriage.

A major guarantee is Rythu Bharosa, a farmers' investment support scheme, under which the Congress has promised ₹15,000 per acre to 58.33 lakh farmers. The BRS government had implemented the Rythu Bandhu scheme providing ₹5,000 per acre and had made a budgetary provision of a little over ₹15,000 crore for the current fiscal. Increasing the investment support by 50% would mean that the Congress government would have to spend an additional ₹7,000 crore every year towards the scheme in addition to the ₹12,000 an acre it has promised to the 30 lakh tenant farmers. The outgoing government did not consider tenant farmers while implementing Rythu Bandhu.

The difficulty in mobilising finances for the implementation of these and other schemes stems from the fact that the revenue receipts of the government are not up to

expectations with only around 50% of the State's projected own tax revenue achieved at the end of seven months of the fiscal year. The borrowings/loans raised by the BRS government over the past nine and a half years had imposed an interest burden of ₹22,407 crore on the government in the current fiscal. Of this, ₹12,956 crore was paid till the end of October. This is in addition to the loans raised through corporations including Kaleshwaram Irrigation Project Corporation Limited.

The government's total revenue receipts at the end of October amounted to ₹99,775 crore, 46.07% of the ₹2.16 lakh crore projected in the budget estimates for the current year. The State's own tax revenue during the period was a little higher at ₹77,382 crore, which is 50.74% of the budget estimate of ₹1.52 lakh crore, according to the provisional data released by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). The state of finances can be gleaned from the fact that Telangana depended on instruments of financial accommodation such as the special drawing facility, ways and means advances, and overdrafts for most part of the current fiscal.

In September, for instance, the government availed itself of ₹863 crore under the special drawing facility for all the 30 days of the month and it resorted to ways and means advances amounting to ₹1,443 crore for 26 days in addition to the ₹666 crore that it raised through overdraft for 10 days.

In the budget estimates, the State had proposed to raise ₹38,234 crore through borrowings, primarily market borrowings, for the year, but the Union Finance Ministry had curtailed the borrowing limit to a little over ₹36,617 crore citing over borrowings during the previous fiscal. The Union Ministry said the limit had been fixed in line with the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission and as per the guidelines for annual borrowing ceiling. The borrowings limit has been fixed at ₹57,813 crore for the current year but it had to be cut down to ₹42,225 crore as the State had over borrowed during the preceding financial years.

This was the case during the previous fiscal, too, when the State could raise open market borrowings to the tune of ₹32,119 crore as against the projected ₹52,167 crore, according to CAG figures. The State had ended up paying interest of ₹20,952 crore as against the ₹18,911 crore projected in the budget for 2022-23, the CAG report said.

The State had to depend on sale of lands and also advance auction of liquor outlets ahead of the announcement of the schedule for the Assembly elections, which provided it some cushion for a while.

Given this background, it will be a herculean task for the new government to manage its finances. It can ill-afford to raise taxes and duties in the immediate future and the prospect of securing permissions for additional borrowings to meet its commitments also appear to be remote.

BJP's social media spending was far higher than Congress's

In the recent Assembly elections, apart from official handles, non-party handles from Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh spent lakhs on political ads

DATA POINT

Team Lokniti-CSDS

Lokniti-Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) investigated the expenditure on online advertisement campaigns by the BJP and the Congress in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan. We found in the three studies that significant amounts were allocated for ads on Facebook and Instagram. For the purposes of the study, we used Meta Ad library archives. Meta Ad library is an open source archive of ads across Meta's products. It contains information on spend, reach, and funding activities. The ads about social issues, elections and politics are visible, whether active or inactive, and are stored in the Ad library for seven years.

Madhya Pradesh

This study takes into account the ads posted by @INCMadhyaPradesh and @BJPMadhyaPradesh. In the 90 days preceding the elections, the BJP's expenditure was more than that of the Congress **(Table 1)**. The BJP spent about ₹94 lakh and the Congress spent about ₹72 lakh. However, this trend reversed if only the last 30 days before the elections were considered as the Congress spent nearly double the amount spent by the BJP.

For the purposes of our study, we have only taken into account the @BJPMadhyaPradesh and @INCMadhyaPradesh accounts. However, there are multiple other non-party accounts posting political ads. The top 10 accounts have spent a significant total amount of ₹1.1 crore. **Table 2A** is the list of top 10 spenders according to the Meta Ad archives.

A thematic analysis of the ads posted in the last 30 days by @BJPMadhyaPradesh is listed in **Table 3A** and by @INCMadhyaPradesh in **Table 3B.** It was found that almost 30% of the ads posted by @BJPMadhyaPradesh focused on encouraging voters to vote for the BJP. This was followed by ads on manifesto (27%). Nearly 25% of ads posted by @INCMadhyaPradesh were based on the Congress manifesto. Almost 19% of the ads were personal attacks that were majorly focused on BJP leader Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Chhattisgarh

The BJP account spent a sum of ₹79.7 lakh in the last 90 days leading to the election, whereas the Congress account spent an amount of ₹4.7 lakh (**Table 1).**

Among the top 10 spenders on ads in the State, six belonged to non-party and non-candidate campaigners. The top pages on Facebook according to the amount spent on ads in Chhattisgarh are listed in **Table 2B.**

A total of 592 BJP ads and 93 Congress ads, posted in the last 30 days, were monitored and profiled thematically **(Table 4A and 4B).** We found that nearly 42% of the BJP's Chhattisgarh posts were focused on seeking votes. This was followed by ads on the party's manifesto and promises, popularised under the caption 'Modi Ki Guarantee' (19%) and allegations of corruption (12%). Of all the ads posted by the Congress, most were against the BJP and its shortcomings (21%). This was followed by ads on the Congress manifesto (19%).

Rajasthan

This study takes into account the ads posted by @BJP4Rajasthan and @INCRajasthan. In the 90 days preceding the elections, the expenditure of the BJP was much higher than the Congress (**Table 1).** The BJP spent about ₹94 lakh and the Congress spent about ₹2.18 lakh.

Based on the thematic analysis of the ads, we found that the BJP spent more than the Congress on ads with negative undertones. The party spent a total of ₹2.3 lakh-₹2.8 lakh on such ads. **(Table 5)**

Social media budget

The data were sourced from the Meta Ad library archives. This is an open source archive of ads across Meta's products that contains information on spend, reach, and funding activities

Table 1: Amount of money spent by political parties on online ad campaigns in the 90 days preceding the State elections

State	BJP	INC
M.P.	94.4 L	72.8 L
Chhattisgarh	79.7 L	4.7 L
Rajasthan	97.7 L	2.1 L

Table 2: The table lists the top 10 spenders on Facebook, according to the Meta Ad archives

2A: Madhya Pradesh	
Page Name	**Amount**
MP ke Mann mein Modi	46.1 L
Akash Vijayvargiya Team	17.4 L
CorruptionNath	14.5 L
Kailash Vijayvargiya Mitra Mandal Gandhinagar Indore	11.6 L
Vinay Saxena	5.7 L
Misinformation Combat Alliance	5.5 L
Indore Express News	5.5 L
We support Shivraj singh chouhan	4.1 L
Akash Vijayvargiya Office	3.5 L
Nilay daga	3.4 L
2B: Chhattisgarh	
Page Name	**Amount**
Bjp Chhattisgarh	47.9 L
Chhattisgarhiya Chaupal	17.1 L
Kahat Mahatari	3.9 L
Indian National Congress - Chhattisgarh	3.8 L
Bhupesh Baghel	3.6 L
Congress Sarkar Bharosa Barkarar	3.1 L
Bhupesh Hai To Bharosa Hai	1.9 L
I Support Brijmohan Agrawal	1.8 L
Young India Foundation	1.5 L

Table 3: Thematic profiles of ads posted in the last 30 days by @BJPMadhyaPradesh and @INCMadhyaPradesh across Facebook and Instagram

Madhya Pradesh

Table 3A: BJP	
Themes	**(%)**
Vote for BJP	30
Manifesto	27
Party attacks	13
Good governance	12
Personal attacks	11
Religion	4
Neutral	3

Table 3B: INC	
Themes	**(%)**
Manifesto	25
Personal attacks	19
Party attacks	19
Vote for INC	18
Neutral	10
Misgovernance	8
Religion	1

Table 4: Thematic profiles of ads posted in the last 30 days by @BJPChhattisgarh and @INCChhattisgarh across Facebook and Instagram

Chhattisgarh

Table 4A: BJP	
Themes	**(%)**
Vote for BJP	42
Manifesto and promises	19
Corruption	12
BJP for party	10
Misgovernance	5
Neutral updates	4
Women empowerment	3
Invoking religion	2
Personal attacks	2
Caste politics	1

Table 4B: INC	
Themes	**(%)**
Against the BJP	21
Manifesto	19
Vote for INC	16
Good governance	12
Neutral updates	14
Against Narendra Modi	10
Youth welfare	5
Caste politics	3

Table 5: Amount spent on negative ads in Rajasthan

Party	Amount	Number of Ads
INC	24,800-31,900	15
BJP	2.3 L-2.8 L	108

L= in ₹ lakh

- The study on M.P. was done by Sanjay Kumar (Professor, CSDS), Aditi Singh (Assistant Professor, O.P. Jindal Global University), Aachal Mishra and Kaushiki K. Singh (short-term researchers, Lokniti-CSDS)
- The study on Chhattisgarh was done by Sanjay Kumar, Aditi Singh, and Kaushiki K. Singh
- The study on Rajasthan was done by Sanjay Kumar, Aditi Singh and Avika Singh (short-term researcher, Lokniti-CSDS)

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 11, 1973

Full diplomatic ties with both Koreas

New Delhi, Dec. 10: India's decision to recognise both North and South Korea and establish full diplomatic relations with them was announced in Palestine to-day, after both the Governments were officially informed about it. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Surendrapal Singh, who read out the announcement in the Lok Sabha, said India has taken this decision to promote friendly relations and all-sided co-operation with the two Korean States. He said: "While we have always shared and supported the aspirations of the Korean people for a unified Korea through peaceful bilateral negotiations and without outside interference, the two Governments have come into their own and have established themselves over the course of the past quarter of a century." After establishing consular relations with both Koreas in 1962, India waited for the emergence of some sort of modus vivendi between them before according full recognition. The present Indian decision was influenced by the direct contacts established by North and South Korea on their own initiative for reducing the prevailing tensions. The first indication of the impending recognition of the two Koreas, in consonance with India's policy of maintaining beneficial contacts with divided States, without coming in the way of their own efforts towards peaceful reunification, was contained in the recent Indo-Soviet joint declaration. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and the Soviet Communist Party chief, Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, had welcomed the contacts between North and South Korea in the belief that "the relaxation of tensions in the Korean peninsula will make an important contribution to the consolidation of peace and security in Asia."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DECEMBER 11, 1923

Cotton trade

London, Dec. 19: Joint Cotton Trade Committee met at Manchester today and passed a resolution that no object could be served by further discussing the question of control of the whole cotton trade. Question of control of American spinning section was referred to sub committee and the conference decided to investigate other matters which may help towards the betterment of the present conditions as a whole.

From Page One

Vishnu Deo Sai chosen as new Chhattisgarh CM

Dr. Singh said, "National president [J.P. Nadda] has talked about it. I will discharge any responsibility given to me." He confirmed that the names of the two Deputy Chief Ministers had been decided. There is speculation that the BJP's current State president, Arun Sao, a prominent OBC leader who was in the race for the top post, and Vijay Sharma, who defeated Congress veteran and the only Muslim Minister in the previous government, Mohammmad Akbar, in Kawardha have been shortlisted for the Deputy Chief Minister's posts.

Earlier, Mr. Sai's name was proposed by former CM Dr. Singh, and supported by Mr. Sao and former Minister Brijmohan Agrawal. The new CM is considered close to Dr. Singh.

Shortly after Mr. Sai's name was announced, BJP workers gathered at Kushabhau Thakre Parisar, the party's State headquarters in Raipur where the Legislative Party meeting was held, raised slogans hailing PM Narendra Modi, and the late Jashpur royal family scion Dilip Singh Judeo, besides the newly appointed CM.

'Nations must be able to adapt to climate change'

At COP-21 in Paris, negotiators decided that a Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) was necessary to get all countries on board a common framework for adaptation. There were eight workshops held after the previous COP in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, where country representatives proposed concrete targets that could be used to quantitatively define whether the world was indeed becoming more adaptable vis-a-vis climate change.

Adaptation is expected to require developed countries to invest trillions of dollars in developing countries and island states, which are most at risk from climate hazards. Again, only a fraction of what is required has made its way to where it is required. Given this, experts said they were not enthused by the latest draft of the adaptation document. The latest version of the text was "disappointing," a senior observer told *The Hindu*. "There are no clearly defined targets, no clear definition of a framework, lots of very general exhortations, no indicators, no outcome targets...," said Dr. Anand Patwardhan, who teaches and researches climate policy at the University of Maryland in the United States.

Freebie politics will take a toll on economy: Dhankhar

Vice-President attacks some global entities for treating India unfairly, names corruption as the greatest threat to human rights; Indian governance is free from corruption, nepotism, he says

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The politics of so-called freebies for which "we see a mad race" distort expenditure priorities, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Sunday. He was speaking at an event organised by the National Human Rights Commission to mark the 75th Human Rights Day. He said there was a need to empower human minds and human resources and not just people's pockets.

Jagdeep Dhankhar attends the National Human Rights Commission event to mark Human Rights Day in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

Cautious about the upsurge in freebie politics, Mr. Dhankar said that this would undermine the basic framework of macroeconomic stability. "Empowerment of pocket through fiscal grants only increases dependence," he said, encouraging the NHRC to catalyse a healthy national debate on freebie politics and come up with a paper on the issue.

The Vice-President expressed concern over the "pernicious narratives and external calibrations" by individuals gauging India's progress from air-conditioned and closed chambers, detached from the "index of hope, optimism, and confidence" fostered by government policies.

'Free from corruption'

Mr. Dhankar said that it pained him to see India being treated unfairly by some global entities. He urged India's critics to delve deep into the nation's performance on human rights and not merely scratch the surface.

He also said that he wanted "such entities" to take note of "India's governance model that is free from corruption, favouritism, nepotism". "It's dictated by transparency, accountability and merit," he said.

Terming corruption the greatest danger to human rights, Mr. Dhankhar added that the long-time bane of corruption in India had now been contained.

He also highlighted the positive changes taking place in India in the advancement of human rights, asserting its position as a "role model" for the world. Referring to transparency and accountable governance as a "game-changer" for the promotion of human rights, especially for vulnerable sections of society, the Vice- President said that the use of technology in service delivery had also played an instrumental role in fortifying this advancement.

Mr. Dhankhar termed the Union government's scheme to provide gas connections to poor households as a "transformative revolution". He also praised the massive infrastructural growth as quintessential for the "proliferation and empowerment of human rights".

Recognising the appointment of a tribal woman as the President of India as a testament to human rights, the Vice-President concluded by emphasising that human rights were a collective endeavour.

How should India be in 2047? Govt. to seek inputs from students

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

B.V.R. Subrahmanyam

At an interaction with Governors of States, Vice-Chancellors, and faculty members of around 700 universities on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a month-long outreach programme to seek inputs from youngsters on the vision for India in 2047.

NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam said on Sunday that the ideas of students would be assessed and suitable interventions incorporated into the Vision 2047 document that the Prime Minister is likely to unveil by January-end.

While the exercise will be voluntary, students will be asked to make commitments on what they would do to help make India a developed country, apart from sending suggestions on how to reach that goal, and what according to them would be a developed India by 2047 look like in different aspects.

"There will be a day-long workshop held at all the Raj Bhavans on Monday, following which universities will conduct their own programmes to seek their students' ideas," Mr. Subrahmanyam said, adding that the government expected this to generate thousands of inputs by early January.

"Some of the best ideas would get rewarded, and we will strive to incorporate them in the current version of the Vision 2047 plan as interventions without altering the broader macro goals," he said.

Stating that India was at a turning point, Mr. Subrahmanyam said the foundations and building blocks necessary to transform it into a developed nation were now in place.

Annual growth rates over a period paint a true picture: Cong.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Jairam Ramesh

The Congress on Sunday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman were "repeatedly talking up" transformative GDP growth based on the July-September numbers but what mattered more was annual growth rates over a longer period.

Annual average GDP growth rate during the UPA government was 8.1% against 5.4% under the current dispensation, it added.

The Congress's attack comes after Mr. Modi said last week that the GDP growth figure for the second quarter of this fiscal year displayed the resilience and strength of the Indian economy amid testing times globally.

In a post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Jairam Ramesh, Congress general secretary in charge of communications, said, "The Prime Minister and the Finance Minister are repeatedly talking up the 'transformative GDP growth in India' based on the recent numbers for July-September 2023. But if you leave aside quarterly growth numbers, which could be high or low for a number of reasons, What matters a lot more – to understand how well the economy is doing – is annual growth rates over a longer period of time," he said.

"Annual average GDP growth rate when Dr. Manmohan Singh was Prime Minister: 8.1%. Annual average GDP growth rate so far under Prime Minister Narendra Modi: 5.4%," Mr. Ramesh said.

Which is truly transformative, he asked.

Centre had not opposed caste survey in Bihar: Shah

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at the 26th meeting of EZC in Patna on Sunday. ANI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday urged Union Home Minister Amit Shah to give the State the special category status. He was speaking at the 26th meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council here.

He also requested Mr. Shah to include the new State law on higher reservation in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

Mr. Shah said that when his party was in power in Bihar, it had supported the caste-based survey, said a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs. He said the Centre never had any intention of creating hurdles in the survey. Mr. Kumar was meeting Mr. Shah for the first time in Patna after he snapped ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party in August last year.

Giving details of the funds that will be spent in the next five years in Bihar after the caste-based survey, Mr. Kumar said, "A total of ₹2.5 lakh crore will be spent on all the work that will be completed in the next five years. If Bihar gets the status of 'Special State' by the Central government, then we will complete this work in a very short time."

"We have been demanding special status for Bihar since 2010. Despite continuous development initiatives, Bihar stands far below the national average in development parameters. It meets all the conditions for special category status. Now the caste-based survey is also done. I hope that you will definitely think about giving special status to Bihar," Mr. Kumar said. He said reservation for the deprived castes in the State had been increased from 50% to 65%. There was also a 10% reservation for the economically weaker sections in the general category. With this, the total reservation had reached 75%, he said. "Our government has requested the Central government to include the new reservation law in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution. I have full hope that the [Union] Home Minister will definitely take initiative to conduct a caste-based census across the country," Mr. Kumar said.

Bihar Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav, West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, Jharkhand Finance Minister Rameshwar Oraon and Odisha Minister of State for Home Tushar Kranti Behera were present at the meet.

Assam to take action against those who forged papers to be in NRC

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Assam government is planning action against people of "doubtful nationality" who forged documents to be enlisted in the National Register of Citizens (NRC) updated in August 2019. About 19.06 lakh out of 3.3 crore applicants were kept out of Assam's NRC, which was updated based on a 1951 list. During the scrutiny of the documents submitted to establish citizenship, it was found that the documents of about 2 lakh applicants were forged.

"We shall start the process of weeding out people who used forged documents to figure in the updated NRC. We are consulting some experts on how to take action against such people," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday.

The NRC authorities had sought a set of documents for applicants to establish their citizenship and be on the list of Indians.

'Mayawati has named nephew as successor'

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Mayawati

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati named her nephew Akash Anand as her political successor on Sunday at a national-level meeting of the party in Lucknow, a senior office-bearer of the BSP said on Sunday.

"Akash Anand has been declared the *uttaradhikari* (heir) by *Behanji* (Mayawati). She asked us to work hard for the 2024 parliamentary polls," Udayveer Singh, BSP district head from Shahjahanpur, told presspersons. Mr. Singh added that Mr. Anand had been given the responsibility of strengthening the organisation in different States. However, the BSP's official statement issued after the meeting did not mention such a decision.

Mr. Anand, 28, national coordinator of the party, was at the BSP chief's side during the 2019 Lok Sabha and 2022 Assembly polls. His stature has been growing within the party, evident from his active campaigning during the recent Assembly elections.

INDIA bloc plans next meeting for Dec. 19

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

With seat sharing on the agenda, the Congress is likely to have a tough time with negotiations

Leaders of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) will meet here on December 19. This will be the bloc's first meeting in three months as all its activities were paused with the Congress focusing on the Assembly elections in five States.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh announced the date on X. On top of the agenda is talks on seat sharing as was resolved in the bloc's meetings held in Mumbai on August 31 and September 1. Several Opposition parties have said, both privately and publicly, that the seat-sharing formula should have been in place by October-end and it was already too late. The election campaign, they argued, cannot be structured without the seat-sharing formula.

The Congress, with its defeat in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, is in a relatively weak position to negotiate. In Tamil Nadu, Bihar, and Maharashtra, the alliance is in place. However, problems will arise in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, and West Bengal.

Odisha plans selfie point with CM on campuses

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Taking a cue from the University Grants Commission which asked universities to set up a selfie point where students could take selfie against the backdrop of PM Narendra Modi's photo, the Odisha government has come up with a similar selfie initiative on campuses of institutes of higher education. The selfie points will have photographs of CM Naveen Patnaik. The Department of Higher Education has directed all principals and nodal officers to set up a selfie point in college premises and those should be in prominent place.

Cases of human trafficking victims being forced to commit cybercrimes on the rise

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The first Interpol operation against fraud schemes fuelled by victims of human trafficking has unearthed further evidence that the trend is expanding beyond the southeast Asian region. Indian enforcement agencies also participated in the exercise.

The fraud schemes included fake cryptocurrency investments, fraudulent work-from-home offers, and lottery and online gambling scams.

Known as "Operation Storm Makers II", the Interpol exercise resulted in the arrest of 281 persons in different countries, on charges such as human trafficking, passport forgery, corruption, telecommunications fraud, and sexual exploitation.

While 149 human trafficking victims were rescued, over 360 investigations were opened, several of which are still being pursued by law enforcement agencies.

According to Interpol, the Telangana police registered one of the first cases in India of human trafficking committed to force victims to commit cyber-fraud. As it turned out, an accountant was lured to a southeast Asian country, where he was made to participate in online fraud schemes and subjected to inhuman conditions. He was able to leave following the payment of a ransom.

In August, a UN Human Rights Office report took up the issue and found that the frauds ranged from romance-investment scams and cryptofraud to illegal gambling.

"Victims face a range of serious violations and abuses, including threats to their safety and security; and many have been subjected to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary detention, sexual violence, forced labour, and other human rights abuses," the UN report said.

"Credible sources indicate that at least 1,20,000 people across Myanmar may be held in situations where they are forced to carry out online scams, with estimates in Cambodia similarly at around 1,00,000. Other States in the region, including Lao PDR, the Philippines and Thailand, have also been identified as main countries of destination or transit where at least tens of thousands of people have been involved," the report added, noting that the scam syndicates generated annual revenues amounting to billions of dollars.

"Most people trafficked into the online scam operations are men, although women and adolescents are also among the victims," it said.

In October, Ugandan law enforcement had reported that several citizens were taken to Dubai on the promise of jobs and then to Myanmar via Thailand.

Eight charred to death as SUV catches fire in U.P.

Press Trust of India
BAREILLY

Eight people, including a child, were charred to death in their SUV as it caught fire after hitting a truck in Bareilly district, the police said on Sunday.

The driver of the SUV lost control of the vehicle after a tyre puncture. It jumped the barrier onto the other side of the road and was hit by the truck, they said. The accident occurred late on Saturday near Dubhaura village in the Bhojipura area on the Bareilly-Nainital road, they added. By the time the police reached the spot, the SUV was engulfed in flames, the police said.

From village sarpanch to Chief Minister, unassuming Sai basks in the spotlight

Starting his political career as the head of an obscure village, the tribal leader gained recognition for his hard work, affable nature, and for keeping a low-profile; the BJP believes his selection will also influence upcoming Assembly polls in neighbouring States such as Jharkhand and Odisha

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

Vishnu Deo Sai, 59, who was chosen by the Bharatiya Janata Party as the new Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh Assembly, has worked his way up, from a village sarpanch to the most coveted post in the State.

While his tribal identity and relative seniority in the party hierarchy were considered crucial to his selection as Chief Minister ahead of next year's Lok Sabha election, his affable nature and reputation for being low-profile, and backing of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), were also contributing factors.

Besides being a former Union Minister, Mr. Sai is a four-time MP, three-time MLA, and had been the State BJP president twice. Hailing from a political family – his grandfather was a nominated MLA and one of his uncles served as an MP and Union Minister – Mr. Sao took the political plunge in 1980 and won his first election in 1989 from Bagia, his home village in Jashpur district of the then undivided Madhya Pradesh.

During the campaign phase of the Assembly election in a State where the BJP had not projected a Chief Ministerial face, it was almost unthinkable for most observers that an unassuming person such as Mr. Sai, who prefers to stay in the background, would be the eventual pick for the top office.

However, the first hint of the party having bigger plans for him came at the peak of the campaign, courtesy a "*bada aadmi*" or "big shot" remark by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

"You make him an MLA, we will make him a big shot," said Mr. Shah while campaigning for Mr. Sai in Kunkuri, a seat he went on to win by 25,541 votes.

However, on that very day, Mr. Shah had said the same for O.P. Choudhary, a bureaucrat-turned-politician contesting from the Raigarh seat. The election itself was seen as a tough fight for the BJP against the ruling Congress which had a strong CM face in Bhupesh Baghel. Weeks later, the tables turned and the BJP won 54 seats in the 90-member Assembly, its highest tally ever. The Congress was reduced to 35.

Meteoric rise: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister-designate Vishnu Deo Sai with Biswabhusan Harichandan on Sunday. ANI

A major factor in BJP's win this time was its performance in Sarguja and Bastar, where it together won 22 of the 26 seats on offer. In making these gains, the BJP reversed the trends witnessed in the 2018 election, when Congress won major victories in the tribal belts and dislodged the BJP after three continuous tenures. At present, the BJP holds 17 of the 29 seats reserved for tribals in the State. This was also the first election where the issue of a tribal Chief Minister was prominently raised, by a new outfit led by former Union Minister called Hamar Raj, although the party itself could not make an impact.

With the Lok Sabha election on the horizon, the BJP believes that apart from giving Sarguja its due, this will have a ripple effect in Bastar and also on neighbouring States such as Jharkhand and Odisha where Assembly elections are due next year, said sources. The two-Deputy CM formula is also seen as a measure to ensure that no major caste group is antagonised.

On the question on being a prominent tribal face for the party after his name was announced, Mr. Sai said that the BJP had always respected the tribal community, referring to the appointment of Droupadi Murmu as the first tribal woman President of the country and the formation of a separate Ministry for the welfare of tribals when the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government was in power.

Mr. Sai has completed higher secondary education and is father of three children, a son and two daughters. Last year, when he was replaced by Arun Sao as the State BJP president, the ruling Congress had taken potshots at the BJP for removing a tribal as State chief on World Tribal Day. He himself chose to play down the issue. His family members who expressed joy at his appointment said that his mild-mannered ways have brought him success so far and would take him further ahead.

Soon after his name was announced, shouts of "*Aadivasi Raj Karhi*" (Chhattisgarhi tribals will rule) filled the air at Kushabhau Thakre Parisar, the headquarters of Chhattisgarh BJP unit, signifying the importance of the decision in a State where 32% of the population is tribal.

Ethics panel asked Mahua to explain 'nature of friendship' with industrialist

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

A transcript of expelled MP Mahua Moitra's deposition in front of the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee shows that she was asked a range of personal questions: "Why do you consider industrialist Darshan Hiranandani a dear friend?", "What is the nature of your friendship with him?", and "Where did you stay on your trips to Dubai?"

The transcript is part of the Ethics Committee's report that was tabled in Parliament on Friday, accusing the Trinamool Congress leader of taking pecuniary benefits in exchange for asking questions in Parliament.

According to a complaint filed by her former partner, at least 50 questions that she asked in the House were meant to benefit Mr. Hiranandani's business interests. Ms. Moitra was expelled on the basis of the panel's recommendation, which was adopted by the Lok Sabha by a voice vote.

Before beginning her deposition on November 2, Ms. Moitra was warned by the committee's Chairman, BJP MP Vinod Kumar Sonkar, that her behaviour towards the complainants, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai, and industrialist Darshan Hiranandani was her personal matter, and therefore during the deliberations, she should not bring up "dogs, cats, jilted x or jilted y".

Mahua Moitra

Mr. Sonkar then went on to quote a statement posted by Ms. Moitra on her X account, in which she had referred to Mr. Hiranandani as a "dear friend". Ms. Moitra responded, saying that she stood by her statement and asserted that "he is a dear close personal friend".

Mr. Sonkar pressed on. "Why do you consider Mr. Hiranandani a dear friend," he asked. To this, Ms. Moitra launched into an explanation on the usage of "dear" in the English language.

'"Dear' is an English word which means close to somebody and who you are fond of. When I write a letter to you, I would say 'Dear chairperson Sir', which means I am close to you and fond of you," she said.

Flash point

The interrogation reached a flash point when Mr. Sonkar's asked Ms. Moitra to explain the nature of her friendship with Mr. Hiranandani. Ms. Moitra dismissed the question, declaring that "it is very cheap". She said it was her right to privacy as to what kind of friends she keeps, though she clarified that she had no business dealings with Mr. Hiranandani.

Mr. Sonkar then asked whether Ms. Moitra also knew Mr. Hiranandani's wife, Neha, and what was the nature of the relationship between the two women. Several other members of the panel objected to this, pointing out that Ms. Hiranandani had not been mentioned in Mr. Hiranandani's affidavit and was not relevant to the ongoing deliberations. Amid protests from several Opposition members and Ms. Moitra, Mr. Sonkar tried to explain his line of questioning. "The reason I asked these questions is because she wrote 'dear friend'," he said.

Mr. Sonkar also asked for details of the occasions that Ms. Moitra had spoken to Mr. Hiranandani since October 13, 2023, and the dates and places of her meetings with him. Did she visit Dubai to meet him and when she went to Dubai, where did she stay, he asked.

He insisted that she would have to tell the panel the details of the hotels where she had stayed since it was part of the "travel expenses" that Mr. Hiranandani had reportedly borne on her behalf. Ms. Moitra countered this by saying, "You can ask me, what are the travel expenses. You cannot assume that these are hotels."

Ms. Moitra and other Opposition leaders staged a walkout after the meeting dissolved into chaos.

Centre rejects 'fake, fabricated' report by U.S. news portal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

No order issued to deal with threat of Khalistan sympathisers in the Western countries, Ministry says

The External Affairs Ministry on Sunday "strongly" denied that a written order was issued in April to deal with the threat of Khalistani sympathisers in Western countries.

The remarks by spokesperson Arindam Bagchi came after *The Intercept*, a U.S.-based online news outlet, reported that the official order was signed by Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra and listed several pro-Khalistani figures, including Hardeep Singh Nijjar who was killed in an incident in Canada on June 18.

"We strongly assert that such reports are fake and completely fabricated. There is no such memo," Mr. Bagchi said in response to the report that indicated India's growing impatience with Khalistani figures in Western countries.

"Concrete measures shall be adopted to hold the suspects accountable," the publication had reported. In response, Mr. Bagchi said without naming the news outlet, "This is part of a sustained disinformation campaign against India. The outlet in question is known for propagating fake narratives peddled by Pakistani intelligence. The posts of the authors confirm this linkage. Those who amplify such fake news only do so at the cost of their own credibility."

The news by the portal comes ahead of the scheduled visit to India by FBI chief Christopher Wray, who is expected to take up the case featuring Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

The U.S. Justice Department said in November that they had arrested a man who allegedly was working to assassinate Mr. Pannun, a spokesperson for the Khalistan movement based in New York and Canada. The case came in the backdrop of the India-Canada tensions over the death of Nijjar.

Caste census will be a key issue in LS poll: Cong. leader

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The results of the Assembly elections in five States are not a rejection of the caste census issue, a senior Congress leader said. The party lost in four States.

The leader said the caste census would remain one of the key poll planks of the party in the Lok Sabha election next year.

The party had promised that it would conduct a caste census if it returned to power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and if it won in Madhya Pradesh. A similar promise was made in Telangana.

"Results are not a repudiation of the caste census issue. It remains one of the central subjects for all parties in the INDIA bloc," a senior leader said. After the results, the party is now in a huddle to devise its messaging for the 2024 Lok Sabha election. "The 2024 election will be an assessment of the governance record of the 10 years of the Narendra Modi government. The question here is are you better off today?" the leader said.

The Modi-centric campaign of the BJP, the leader said, would be countered with the slogan "*Main Nahi Hum*" (We, not I). The three issues that dominated the Bharat Jodo Yatra – increasing economic inequalities, social polarisation and political authoritarianism – would remain central to the Congress's campaign, the leader said.

Asked if the "Congress guarantees" failed to garner enthusiasm among voters, the senior leader said that on the contrary it forced the Modi government to adopt the agenda. "They stopped referring to the welfare policy as "*revdis*". The attempt was instead to out-guarantee us," he added.

INBRIEF

Amid suspense over CM post, BJP MLAs meet Vasundhara

Some newly elected BJP MLAs met senior party leader and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje at her residence on Sunday, amid suspense over whom the party will pick for the top post in the State. The BJP is yet to announce the meeting of the legislature party to choose its leader, who will be the Chief Minister. Nearly 10 MLAs, including Ajay Singh and Babu Singh, were at Ms. Raje's residence, sources in the party said. Ms. Raje, a two-time Chief Minister, is among the frontrunners for the post. Earlier, several BJP MLAs had met Ms. Raje and the meetings were seen as a show of strength. She was recently in Delhi, where she also met the BJP president JP Nadda. PTI

Secular forces must redouble efforts: CPI(M) on BJP's victory

The Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (M) on Sunday issued a statement saying that the BJP's victory in three State Assemblies underlines the need for "secular democratic forces to redouble their efforts". The statement credited the ruling party's "control over large sections of media", its "massive money power" and "cynical use of caste divisions" for its victory in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. In the statement issued a day after the Polit Bureau meeting in Delhi, the party noted that though the Congress managed to more or less retain its 2018 vote share, the BJP managed to increase it in all three States. "There is a consolidation of the core Hindutva vote in all three States," it said.

BJP's aim was not victory but reining in Shivraj in M.P.: Raut

The BJP used every opportunity to insult incumbent Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Shiv Sena (UBT) faction MP Sanjay Raut alleged on Sunday. He said that prime objective of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah was not to defeat the Congress but to rein in Mr. Chouhan on his home turf. In his column in the party's mouthpiece *Saamana*, Mr. Raut launched a broadside against Congress leader Kamal Nath, remarking that there was "a great danger" in the 2024 Lok Sabha election [for the Congress] if there were "people around the Gandhi family who played politics that favoured" the BJP. He said it was "a myth" that the Congress cannot defeat Mr. Modi and the BJP.

Centre must release funds it owes to Bengal, says Mamata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday demanded that the Centre release funds it owed to the State. She also announced a number of initiatives for people in north Bengal, including a monthly unemployment allowance of ₹1,500 to permanent employees of closed tea estates. She said that along with the unemployment allowance, free electricity, drinking water, and healthcare facilities would also be provided. She said the Centre owed ₹1.15 lakh crore to West Bengal and added that she had sought an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi later this month to speak on the issue.

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES VIJAYPUR, JAMMU
Admission NoticeNo.SR-2/2023

F.No.AIIMS/JMU/Adm/Recruitment-SR/2023/02

All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Vijaypur Jammu invites Online applications from Indian citizens as per Govt. of India Residency Scheme, for the tenure posts of Senior Residents / Senior Demonstrators for a maximum period upto 3years for the session 2023-2024.Brief Information is given below:

Dates for Online registration	
Online registration Opens on	11.12.2023 (Monday)
Online registration Closes on	20.12.2023 (Wednesday)
Interviews dates	23.12.2023 (Saturday) to 27.12.2023 (Wednesday)
Interview Venue	Conference Room, AIIMS Jammu, Camp Office, GMC Doctor's Guest House, Maheshpura Chowk, AIIMS, Jammu, 180001
Reporting Time	9:00 AM

Important: For Prospectus , detailed information etc. please visit the website **www.aiims jammu.edu.in > Recruitment > Open Jobs.** All applicants are required to visit the web site regularly since all subsequent Corrigendum/Addendum/Updates will be uploaded on the web site only.

Sd/-
Executive Director & CEO
AIIMS Jammu

DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION, ODISHA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

ENGAGEMENT OF DEA EMPANELLED TRANSACTION ADVISOR FOR PROVIDING ADVISORY SERVICES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FARMER SKILL & AGRI-INCUBATION CENTER PROJECT AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF ODISHA THROUGH PPP MODE IN THE STATE OF ODISHA

RFP No. 48844 Dated 07.12.2023 : The Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar of Department of Agriculture & Farmers Empowerment, Odisha invites proposal through e-procurement mode from the DEA empanelled consultant for engagement of transaction advisor for providing advisory services for implementation of Farmer Skill & Agri-Incubation Center Project at various locations of Odisha through PPP in the State of Odisha.

The RFP document is available and can be downloaded from the e-procurement portal ; **tenderodisha.gov.in**/ and from website **agrisnetodisha.ori.nic.in / agriodisha.nic.in**. The bidder must possess matching compatible Digital Signature Certificate **(DSC)** to participate in the online Bidding.

The proposal complete in all respect must reach the undersigned by Speed Post / Registered Post to **The Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Krushi Bhawan, Gopabandhu Marg, Bhubaneswar, Odisha PIN-751001 latest by 24.01.2024 by 4:30 PM.**

The proposals received beyond the scheduled last date & time will be rejected out rightly. The Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar reserves the right to reject any/all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha.

L-178: OIPR-01510/11/0006/2324

INBRIEF

Top court to give verdict in Article 370 case today

A Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud is scheduled to give its verdict on Monday on the abrogation of Article 370, primarily on the cardinal issue raised by petitioners as to whether the now-extinct provision was part of the Basic Structure and beyond the amending powers of Parliament. The Bench had, during the hearings, repeatedly questioned the petitioners' claim that Article 370, which gave special privileges to the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, had assumed a permanent character as soon as the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly was dissolved in 1957 after the framing of the State Constitution.

After viral video, man held for killing puppy in Guna

A man was arrested on Sunday in Guna district of Madhya Pradesh after a purported video of him brutally killing a puppy went viral on social media, the police said. Vijay Khatri, Superintendent of Police, Guna, said the accused was identified as Mrityunjay Singh. He said that the action was taken based on a complaint from Jhankaar Sharma. A case under Section 429 (Mischief by killing or maiming cattle, etc.) of IPC and Section 11 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, was registered in the case.

Switzerland, Norway Ministers arriving for dialogue on trade

Four-nation EFTA grouping of Nordic countries has stepped up trade negotiations; the grouping has signed pact with 30 countries; officials say cutting down trade tariffs, mobility of services, opening market access remain unresolved

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

As Trade Ministers from Switzerland and Norway visit Delhi this week, officials say they remain optimistic of reaching an agreement on a trade pact with Nordic countries in the next few months, though several outstanding issues remain and Indian trade negotiators are busy trying to close free trade agreements with the U.K. and Australia.

Talks about the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) and a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) between India, and the four European countries which make up the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), outside the European Union (EU) – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland – began 15 years ago, and despite 20 rounds of negotiations, they have not yet been closed, with attempts to sign an agreement before the general election due in India in early 2024.

Narendra Modi and President of Swiss Confederation Alain Berset in Dubai during the COP-28 summit. X/@NARENDRAMODI

Sources said this week would be a "critical moment" in whether the India-EFTA negotiations can find a breakthrough. The four-nation grouping has already signed 30 free trade agreements (FTAs) with other countries, and has ongoing negotiations with India, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Kosovo and the South American MERCOSUR.

The two-day visit of Norwegian Trade Minister Jan Christian Vestre and Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs Helene Budliger Artieda on Tuesday follows a visit by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Secretary (West) Sanjay Verma to Switzerland and Liechtenstein for Foreign Office Consultations on December 7 and 8 where the India-EFTA TEPA and BIT were discussed.

"Both sides appreciated the ongoing discussions on India-EFTA TEPA and Bilateral Investment Treaty between India and Switzerland," the MEA said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also met with President of the Swiss Confederation Alain Berset on the sidelines of the COP-28 climate summit in Dubai on December 1.

Officials declined to comment on where the logjam in talks is at present. However, they said cutting down trade tariffs, mobility of services and opening market access for companies on both sides remain unresolved.

"Regarding trade in goods, India applies high tariffs on many of the EFTA countries' exports. We obviously look for a substantial reduction of trade barriers, particularly for such high-value-added products as machine tools, advanced chemicals and pharmaceuticals, Swiss chocolate, Norwegian and Icelandic fish, and so on," Ms. Artieda told PTI in an interview earlier this year.

Meanwhile, diplomatic sources said India's relatively small pool of skilled trade negotiators comprising officials in the Commerce and Industries Ministry and the MEA have been stretched thin with other negotiations which are still dragging on. The India-U.K. FTA talks, which were earlier meant to be "completed by Deepavali" in 2022, are still not ready for signing, although officials have been meeting regularly to resolve issues on tariffs, Rules of Origin, and market access for the U.K. legal and financial service firms to India.

India-EU talks over a comprehensive Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) are also moving slowly, though the EU Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski, who led a delegation to Delhi last week, said he was hopeful of an agreement in 2024.

In addition, despite signing an Early Harvest Agreement more than a year ago, the India-Australia Comprehensive Economic and Commercial Agreement (CECA) has still not been signed. U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is due for a bilateral visit to India and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese is due to travel to India for the Quad summit in 2024, and officials say they are trying to complete the agreements before the visits are finalised.

Three held for murder of Karni Sena chief in Jaipur

Press Trust of India
JAIPUR

The Jaipur Police have arrested three men, including two shooters, for their alleged involvement in the Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi murder case. They were caught in Chandigarh in a joint operation by the Rajasthan and Delhi Police.

The accused, nabbed from outside a Chandigarh hotel on Saturday night, were brought to Jaipur and taken to the Sodala police station. Jaipur Police Commissioner Biju George Joseph told a press conference here that the shooters – Nitin Fauji and Rohit Rathore – along with their accomplice Udham Singh were arrested from Sector 22 in Chandigarh. Mr. Fauji, hailing from Haryana's Mahendragarh, is a lance naik in the Army.

Mr. Fauji, along with Rathore and Naveen Shekhawat, went to Gogamedi's home on December 5. Gogamedi was the chief of the Shri Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena. After talking to him for a few minutes, the shooters opened fire at Gogamedi in his living room, leaving him dead. They also shot Shekhawat dead.

21.15 lakh applications received under PM Vishwakarma Scheme, says Skill Ministry

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme, launched by the Centre on September 17, has received over 21 lakh applications in two-and-a-half months, data from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) show. The scheme, aimed at supporting and providing skill-upgrade training to artisans and craftspeople, was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The highest number of applications had come from Karnataka (6.28 lakh), followed by West Bengal (4.04 lakh), Assam (1.83 lakh), Uttar Pradesh (1.53 lakh) and Andhra Pradesh (1.21 lakh). In contrast, 15 States including Haryana, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and north-eastern States have sent fewer than 10,000 applications each.

Women workers protesting at Jantar Mantar demanding the scrapping of Vishwakarma Scheme. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Atul Kumar Tewari, Secretary, MSDE, told *The Hindu* that of 21.15 lakh applications seeking training received till December 1, 9.13 lakh (43%) were from tailors (*darzi*). "Another 4.72 lakh applications, or 22%, were from masons [*mistri*], 1.86 lakh [9%] were from carpenters [*suthar*], and 4% each from basket-makers and barbers [*naai*]," said Mr. Tewari.

"We have also received 4,013 applications for the trade of armourer. It was thought that this was an ancient and redundant profession but it seems armourers are in demand for making movie costumes," Mr. Tewari added.

The Vishwakarma Scheme provides formal training for upgrade and modernisation of traditional skills amid a changing economic landscape. It also offers financial assistance and creates avenues of "market linkage" for persons working in 18 trades and crafts. These include carpenter, boat-maker, armourer, blacksmith, hammer and tool kit maker, locksmith, goldsmith, potter, sculptor, cobbler, mason, basket-maker, doll and toy-maker, barber, garland maker, washerman, tailor, and fishing net-maker.

Mr. Tewari further added that while lakhs of persons have applied across the country, they are being vetted at three levels – by village committees and district and State levels.

"As of December 1, 17,758 candidates are ready to undergo training from 21 States. The target is to cover six lakh beneficiaries in FY 2023-24," Mr. Tewari said. Of these, Karnataka has verified 7,924 candidates, followed by Assam (4,980), Andhra Pradesh (2,737), Uttar Pradesh (1,033). "After the applicants are thoroughly vetted, they will attend basic training of five to seven days and advanced training of 15 days with a stipend of ₹500 per day that will expose them to modern tools, latest technologies, design elements, and digital and financial skills," Mr. Tewari said.

The budget envisaged for the scheme from financial year 2023-24 to 2027-28 is ₹13,000 crore. While 4.04 lakh candidates have applied from West Bengal, the State has not put in place village-, district- and State-level committees for vetting candidates yet, officials said.

Lucknow-based Jai Kumar Tiwari, one of the master trainers, who is also on the training panel of Department of Housing and Urban Planning in Uttar Pradesh, told *The Hindu* that he will train some of the early batches of Vishwakarma applicants at Balia district of Uttar Pradesh. later this month.

Cash seizures from entities owned by Congress MP to be more than ₹350 crore

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR/PATNA

Income tax authorities estimate that cash seizures from entities owned by the Congress Rajya Sabha member Dhiraj Sahu is likely to top ₹350 crore. The cash has been seized by the Income Tax Department from distillery units in Odisha.

Simultaneous counting of cash in Odisha's Titlagarh, Sambalpur, and Balangir came to an end on Sunday. The highest cash seizure was made in the Sudapada locality of Balangir town where 176 bags containing currency notes of different denominations were traced.

"We have so far counted ₹270 crore in the Balangir branch of the State Bank of India," Bhagat Behera, Regional Manager of SBI, said on Sunday afternoon. The counting of cash finally ended in the evening taking the count to ₹305 crore, SBI sources said.

Cash seized by I-T officials after the department raided a firm linked to a Congress MP.

The Balangir branch of the SBI deployed 50 employees and 25 cash counting machines, while 10 machines were kept on standby for uninterrupted counting. In Titlagarh, ₹11 crore in currency notes were counted while the figure in Sambalpur branch was ₹37.5 crore.

A SBI employee said, "We have never seen such volume of cash in our life. Generally, a branch deals cash worth ₹1 or 2 crore. After a point, the volume of cash did not excite us. They appeared just pieces of paper." This is probably the highest-ever cash seizure made by the department in a single case.

Cong. seeks answer

Meanwhile, the Congress has sought clarification from Mr. Sahu over the cash seizures. Party's Jharkhand in-charge Avinash Pandey said this in Ranchi while interacting with the media.

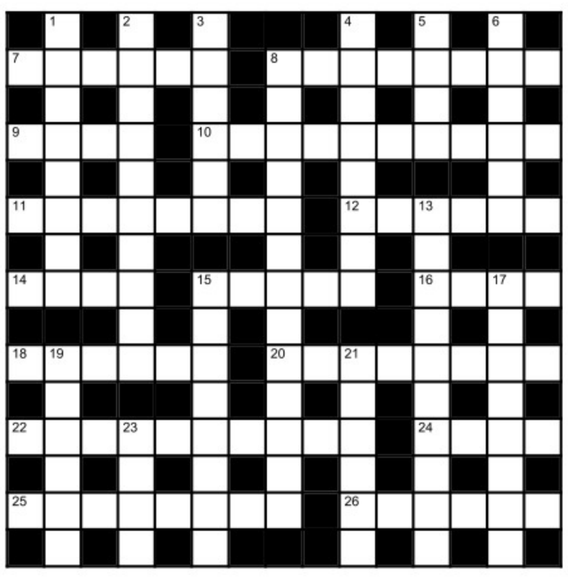
"It is a collective business of his joint family. That family has been in business for over 100 years. Only he can give information about from where he got such a huge amount of money. Since he is associated with the Congress and is an MP, the party has sought clarification from him," Mr. Pandey said in Ranchi.

TH CROSSWORD + 14042

(set by Crescent)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

7 Queer introverted chaps mostly act shy (6)
8 Rush at speed crushing mass? (8)
9 Flag with a legend (4)
10 Jack-of-all-trades in public service largely a good deal (7,3)
11 Black, tarry fuel at sea breaks sign of clean coast (4,4)
12 Desires dead drops in dumps (6)
14 Non-striker for instance, turning to obstruct caught and bowled (4)
15 Charge to wrap tips in non-toxic foil (6)
16 Conservative should wear a streak of light blue? (4)
18 Shade of glass to reduce glare (6)
20 Chain in earlier sailing ship (8)
22 Horse around cottage hard at work (3,3,4)
24 Guy's choice of skirt in Cumbernauld (4)
25 Flight controller putting blame on transport (8)
26 Approach a planet leaving behind Earth (6)

Down

1 Bore I see is bored by everything - irony perhaps? (8)
2 Ragged towel about maniac (3,2,5)
3 Consequence of equals making a base abroad (6)
4 To get the best out of web I circulate upcoming stuff (8)
5 Society snoop becomes active (4)
6 Violet and aster reflecting part interlocked thus? (6)
8 Run away dancing like lead in Hindi song and so on (5,4,4)
13 Skilful method to enter words for ornamental scrolls (10)
15 Fellow men understand? No chance! (6,2)
17 Cruel act made explicit (5-3)
19 Voter wanting electronic reader (6)
21 Money given after successful shot to an assassin (6)
23 Hot sponge put over pants (4)

SUDOKU

			2		4		5	
	2	6						
9				3	8	6		
		3			5			2
5	9		6		2		4	3
8			4			7		
		7	3	5				6
						5	7	
	5		8		7			

No.SS6004 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

		U	N	D	E	R	T	A	K	I	N	G		
C		G		A		E		B		O		O		P
L	O	R	E	N		A	D	A	P	T	A	B	L	E
E		I		D		C		L		A		A		N
R	E	C	R	E	A	T	I	O	N		A	N	O	N
I				L		S		N				A		E
C	A	P	R	I				R	E	A	S	O	N	E	D
		O		O					T		A			
V	E	R	A	N	D	A	H				A	E	S	O	P
A		C				I		S		L				A
L	I	E	S		T	R	U	M	P	E	T	E	R	S
E		L		M		F		O		M		A		T
T	R	A	D	E	M	A	R	K		A	U	G	E	R
S		I		O		R		E		T		L		Y
		N	E	W	Y	E	A	R	S	E	V	E		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	8	5	9	3	6	4	7	2
9	7	2	5	4	8	3	1	6
4	3	6	2	7	1	9	5	8
8	4	7	1	5	9	6	2	3
3	5	9	4	6	2	7	8	1
6	2	1	3	8	7	5	4	9
2	6	8	7	9	5	1	3	4
7	9	4	8	1	3	2	6	5
5	1	3	6	2	4	8	9	7

FAITH

Mantras for fearlessness

Swamy Vedantha Desika has written "Abheethisthavam". It contains 29 slokas. The Acharya prays to Lord Ranganatha to instil fearlessness. He requests the Lord to destroy the evil that has befallen society, which has caused tremendous fear in people. Smt. Prabha Senesh said in a discourse that God will remove our concerns, like pulling weeds from plants. By worshipping God and reciting this Abheethisthavam, we can be fearless, including from the fear of death caused by Yama. The place where His names are chanted is His fortress.

The sensual pleasures of this world are like the bait in the angling rod to catch a fish. We can escape from them by chanting and worshipping Him. He holds various weapons to protect His soul-like devotees. In Sri Rama Charama sloka, the Lord's main objective is to extend (*Abhaya*) refuge to His devotees (*Abhayam Sarva Bhuthebhya:*). In the charama sloka of Sri Bhagavad Gita, the Lord commands us to take refuge in Him, relinquishing all dharmas and assuring that He would release people from all sins (*Sarva dharmaan Parithyajya*). These are well narrated in Abheethisthavam. The Acharya says in a humorous note that the fearless God has one fear – to protect His devotees. The Mother country is the heavenly abode "Sri Vaikuntam" for all the people.

Lustre glows

Weak USD, Fed rate cut hope propel gold, silver

PRECIOUSMETALS

B. Krishnakumar

Consolidating the gains recorded in October, precious metals marched higher last month and closed at near 7-month highs. A weak U.S. dollar and expectations of an interest rate cut by the U.S. Federal Reserve played a key role in bolstering sentiment towards precious metals.

As a result, Comex gold closed 3.2% higher and closed above the psychological $2,000 level at $2,0.57.2 at the end of November. The gain in Comex silver was even more pronounced with the white metal posting an 11.8% gain to settle at $25.66 an ounce. Mirroring the trend in the global markets, MCX gold gained 2.2% in November and closed at ₹62,630. MCX silver outperformed gold and recorded a 5.8% gain to settle at ₹77,555 per kilogram.

The price action in Comex gold was in sync with last month's expectations. Comex gold ruled firm and also hit the target zone of $2,035-2,040 mentioned last month. The price recently retraced after scaling to a life-time high of $2,152 on December 4.

While the medium-term outlook is positive, Comex gold could rule weak in the short-term. A drop to the immediate support zone of $1,960-$1,980 appears likely. Only a move above $2,060 would impart momentum to the upside. Else, expect gold price to be range-bound or witness a downward drift.

The price of Comex silver managed to break out above the high of the prior trading range of $20.6-$24.2. As anticipated, the upside breakout imparted momentum to the price, helping it to reach a high of $25.7 on November 30. The short-term outlook is positive, and the price could head to the immediate target of $24.75-$25.25.

A move above $23.9 would impart further momentum to the upside, while a fall below $23 would delay the progress to the above target zone.

Mirroring the global trend, MCX gold ruled firm in November and also reached the target zone of ₹61,750-₹62,250 mentioned last month.

The recent rally has pushed the price to overbought zone and a short-term pull back is currently underway. The price could drop to an immediate target of ₹59,800-₹60,500 zone. Only a move above ₹62,800 would invalidate this view.

As observed last month, the break out above the upper end of the prior trading range at ₹73,000 resulted in a sharp rise in MCX silver. After touching a high of ₹77,725, MCX silver price has been consolidating in a tight range in the past few days.

Weak outlook

The short-term outlook is negative and silver price could drop to the ₹69,500-₹70,500 zone. A move above ₹76,400 would invalidate this outlook. To summarise, the short-term outlook for the precious metals is not positive. Only a move above the levels mentioned above would invalidate this weak outlook.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. The views and opinion featured in this column are based on analysis of short-term price movement in gold and silver futures at COMEX & Multi Commodity Exchange of India. This is not meant to be a trading or investment advice)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Man of letters: Charlie Munger was extremely well-read, reading everything from the letters of Cicero and Benjamin Franklin to modern-day scholarly articles on psychology and finance. REUTERS

Charlie Munger: needle in a mountain of hay

Philanthropist, investor, writer, lawyer, real estate developer, business executive and a grocery store clerk, Warren Buffet's partner's profound wisdom extends beyond the world of finance

REFLECTIONS

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

When it comes to investing, especially for value investors, the name Charlie Munger brings to mind core tenets not just for investing but to lead life by. A near-centenarian, his life and principles remain invaluable. His advice and wisdom range beyond merely investing, unlike his partner, Warren Buffet. His musings, relating to life, human psychology, and running a business, are extremely important to heed.

He was a man who remained extremely well-read, reading everything from the letters of Cicero and Benjamin Franklin to modern-day scholarly articles on psychology and finance. He was a philanthropist, investor, writer, lawyer, real estate developer, business executive and even a grocery store clerk (he worked in Mr. Buffet's grandfather's grocery store as a teenager).

Cigarette-butt investing

Mr. Munger was an excellent investor who Mr. Buffet routinely credits as the leading reason for his shift away from the Benjamin Graham way of investing. Mr. Buffet, a protege of Graham, used to engage in 'cigarette-butt investing.'

Under the method, an investor looks for companies trading below net working capital and waits for an uptick in its price.

The rationale is the price should eventually climb because the company is trading below what it was worth if liquidated immediately. The investor can then pocket this differential. However, such a method poses multiple drawbacks. The market may not realise such a discrepancy exists for a long time, meaning your capital is tied up with a likely underperforming company. In addition, there is no guarantee the company may not incur losses in the coming quarters, eroding capital value, thus removing room for any price gains. Finally, such opportunities are rare and produce non-scalable returns.

Mr. Munger, on the other hand, suggested Mr. Buffet consider excellent companies at fair prices. Exceptional companies, generally, lead to outsized returns in the long term due to the idea of compounded growth and the reasonable price is compensated by said returns.

However, Mr. Munger's prowess stretches far beyond investing. His lecture, delivered at Harvard University in 1995, remains one of the most listened to, reproduced, and read lectures on human psychology. The lecture, 'The Psychology of Human Misjudgment', covers many broad topics. He famously quipped: "Never, ever, think about something else when you should be thinking about the power of incentives". The first

> Exceptional firms generally lead to outsized returns in long term due to the idea of compounded growth and reasonable price is compensated by returns

lesson in a list of many is the power of incentives and disincentives. He says it is vital to understand incentives, especially when you want to run a business or invest. An investor needs a keen sense of what motivates the board, employees, consumers, and other investors.

Moreover, understanding incentives makes discerning macroeconomic outcomes a more straightforward task. Understanding why certain countries raise interest rates, why investors favour one stock over another, and why CEOs prefer to expand or contract can be tied to decoding what incentives they face. Another lesson of his is to understand the practical consequences of what he terms, the "Liking/Loving tendency" which "acts as a conditioning device that makes the liker or lover tend (1) to ignore faults of, and comply with wishes of, the object of his affection, (2) to favour people, products, and actions merely associated with the object of his affection and (3) to distort other facts to facilitate love."

Such a phenomenon is commonplace among even the most seasoned investors. One notices investors quip, "this promoter never goes wrong", "this company has always done well for me", etc. It is crucial for investors to maintain a rational and bird's eye point of view when it comes to investing. As the English economist John Maynard Keynes stated, "as the facts change my opinions change". Additionally, Mr. Munger also emphasises the misjudgements that stem from envy/jealousy in this lecture as well as his other famous lecture 'How to Guarantee a Life of Misery'. Investors get in the way of returns by comparing portfolio returns with their peers. By comparing, one invests in riskier and reckless opportunities, leading to one's downfall. A detailed inquiry into the lessons one can learn from him would likely consist of a series of long books. His wisdom, however, remains accessible to those who seek it through the lectures, interviews, and written pieces he's left behind.

To encapsulate the essence of Mr. Munger, one must recognise his profound wisdom extends beyond the world of finance, offering timeless insights into human nature and the discipline of decision-making – a legacy that will continue to guide and inspire generations to come. The authors will miss his sage wisdom.

(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant, Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

Why gold has glitter

THINKINVESTOR

As all gold ETFs hold same underlying asset, the returns are similar; pick an actively traded ETF in the secondary market; set up a systematic investment plan on a gold ETF if you plan to buy gold

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

To say that most individuals prefer to invest in gold is axiomatic. In this article, we discuss why gold is, indeed, a good investment for your personal finance.

Financial gold

Our discussion is about financial (gold ETFs), not physical gold. This does not mean you should not buy physical gold. You should consider physical gold holdings (primarily jewellery) as personal effects, not investments.

The following are the reasons why investing in a gold ETF is optimal: One, you may want to gift gold to your children for their wedding. You could accumulate gold jewellery over time, but it could be outdated by the time your children get married. You might as well invest in gold ETFs. That way, you can sell the units in the secondary market and use the proceeds to buy contemporary jewellery at the time your children get married.

A gold ETF holds gold of 99.5% purity. Therefore, such ETFs provide a good hedge for increase in gold prices. Suppose, jewellery prices are higher at the time you buy them because the spot price of gold has increased. Your gold ETF will generate corresponding gains to significantly compensate the increase in the prices.

Household investment

Two, most individuals are comfortable buying gold as it is considered a traditional form of household investment. True, typical practice has been to buy physical gold.

Modern-day living, however, calls for financial gold. Why? Your professional work may require you to relocate from one city to another or even a different country. Financial gold is operationally efficient, as the investment is easily portable.

And three, gold can be a good investment if you are worried that geopolitical tensions around the world could affect your portfolio. The statement 'flight to quality' is typically mentioned in relation to gold investments. This means when market participants are nervous about financial assets such as equity and bonds because of a world crisis, gold is the preferred investment. That said, note gold is not necessarily a good hedge for general inflation. Neither are gold prices stable.

Conclusion

You need not be overly concerned about choice of a gold ETF.

Given that all gold ETFs hold the same underlying asset (gold), their returns are similar. It is best you choose an ETF that is actively traded in the secondary market. You should setup a systematic investment plan on a gold ETF if your objective is to eventually buy physical gold.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.75	8.00	7.25
Capital Small Finance Bank	7.60	7.50	7.15	7.10
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.20	8.00	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.50	6.00	6.75	6.25
Fincare Small Finance Bank	8.61	7.65	8.11	8.00
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.60	6.85	8.60	8.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.25	7.20	7.20
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.50
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.10	6.70	7.10	7.00
Bandhan Bank	7.85	7.25	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.00	6.75	6.50	6.25
CSB Bank	7.75	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.50	6.25	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	7.90	7.15	7.60	7.40
Federal Bank	7.50	6.80	7.00	6.60
HDFC Bank	7.20	6.60	7.00	7.00
ICICI Bank	7.10	6.70	7.00	7.00
IDFC First Bank	7.75	6.50	7.25	7.00
IndusInd Bank	7.50	7.50	7.25	7.25
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.50	7.10	6.50	6.50
Karnataka Bank	7.25	6.95	6.50	6.50
Karur Vysya Bank	7.50	7.00	7.00	6.50
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.25	7.10	6.50	6.20
Nainital Bank	7.05	6.70	6.25	5.75
RBL Bank	8.00	7.50	7.50	7.10
SBM Bank India	8.25	7.05	7.30	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.40	6.60	6.60	6.00
TMB	7.00	7.00	6.50	6.50
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.25	6.75	7.25	6.50
Bank of India	7.25	6.50	6.50	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	7.00	6.50	6.25	6.00
Canara Bank	7.25	6.85	6.80	6.70
Central Bank of India	7.15	6.75	6.50	6.25
Indian Bank	7.25	6.10	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.10	6.80	6.50	6.50
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.75	7.00	6.50
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.40	6.20	6.00	6.00
State Bank of India	7.10	6.80	6.50	6.50
Union Bank of India	7.00	6.30	6.50	6.70

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.05	8.40-10.05
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.90
Union Bank of India	8.40-10.80	8.40-10.95	8.40-10.95
Punjab National Bank	8.45-10.25	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15
Bank of India	8.30-10.75	8.30-10.75	8.30-10.75
Canara Bank	8.50-11.25	8.45-11.25	8.40-11.15
UCO Bank	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30
Bank of Maharashtra	8.50-11.15	8.50-11.15	8.50-11.15
Punjab and Sind Bank*	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00
Indian Overseas Bank	8.40 onwards	8.40 onwards	8.40 onwards
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards
ICICI Bank	8.75 onwards	8.75 onwards	8.75 onwards
Axis Bank	8.70-13.30	8.70-13.30	8.70-9.10
HSBC Bank	8.45 onwards	8.45 onwards	8.45 onwards
South Indian Bank	9.57-10.97	9.57-10.77	9.57-11.42
Karur Vysya Bank	9.23-10.73	9.23-10.73	9.23-10.73

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Karnataka Bank	8.75-10.43	8.75-10.43	8.75-10.43
Federal Bank	8.80 onwards	8.80 onwards	8.80 onwards
Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	9.45-9.95	9.45-9.95	9.45-9.95
Bandhan Bank	9.15-15.00	9.15-13.32	9.15-13.32
RBL Bank	9.15-11.55	9.10-11.30	9.10-11.30
CSB Bank	11.27-13.12	11.27-13.12	11.27-13.12
HDFC Bank	8.35 onwards	8.35 onwards	8.35 onwards
City Union Bank	12.25 - 14.00	12.75 - 14.50	13.25 - 14.75
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.40-10.35	8.40-10.55	8.40-10.75
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.50 onwards	8.50 onwards	8.50 onwards
Tata Capital	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80 onwards	8.80 onwards	8.80 onwards
Indiabulls Housing	8.75 onwards	8.75 onwards	8.75 onwards
Aditya Birla Capital	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75
ICICI Home Finance	9.20 onwards	9.20 onwards	9.20 onwards
Godrej Housing Finance	8.55 onwards	8.55 onwards	8.55 onwards

Rates as on December 6 **Source:Paisabazaar.com**

OSLO

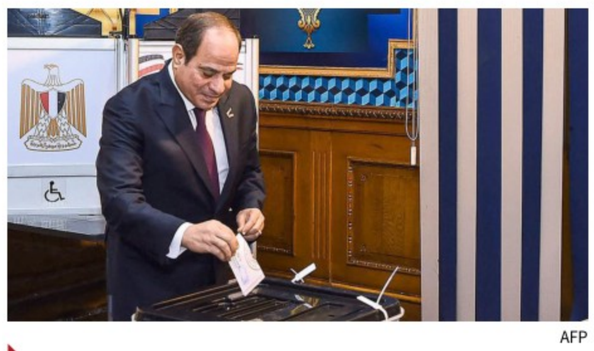
Children of imprisoned Iranian activist accept Nobel on her behalf

REUTERS

The children of imprisoned Iranian activist Narges Mohammadi accepted this year's Nobel Peace Prize in the Norwegian capital on Sunday on behalf of the mother they haven't seen in years. She is renowned for campaigning for women's rights and democracy in her country, as well as fighting against the death penalty. AP

CAIRO

Egyptians vote in election, likely to give President Sisi a third term



AFP

Polling stations opened on Sunday for Egyptians to vote in a presidential election overshadowed by war in neighbouring Gaza and with little doubt that the incumbent Abdel Fattah al-Sisi will secure a third term. The country is in the throes of one of its worst financial crisis and economy will be weighing on citizen's minds. AFP

HONG KONG

Hong Kong holds the territory's first 'patriots only' local elections

AFP

Polls opened in Hong Kong's first "patriots only" district council election on Sunday, with officials dismissing concerns of potentially low turnout in a race that has shut out all opposition candidates after a national security crackdown. The previous election in 2019 had delivered a landslide victory for the pro-democracy camp. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran unveils combat drones equipped with air-to-air missiles

AFP

Iran has reinforced its air defence capabilities by adding combat drones equipped with air-to-air missiles to its arsenal. The drones, with an operational range of up to 1,000 kilometres, were exhibited on Sunday morning during a televised ceremony organised at a military academy in Tehran. AFP

Fighting rages in Gaza after military and diplomatic support from U.S.

About 90% of Gaza's 2.3 million population displaced within the enclave; U.S. to sell over $100 million worth of tank ammunition to Israel; UN Secretary-General says situation is fast deteriorating with irreversible implications for Palestinians

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

Heavy fighting raged on Sunday across Gaza, including in the devastated north, as Israel pressed ahead with its offensive after the U.S. blocked the latest international push for a ceasefire and rushed more munitions to its close ally.

About 90% of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced within the besieged territory, where UN agencies say there is no safe place to flee.

The U.S. has lent vital support to the offensive once again in recent days, by vetoing United Nations Security Council efforts to end the fighting that enjoyed wide international support, and by pushing through an emergency sale of over $100 million worth of tank ammunition to Israel.

Shattered dreams: Members of a displaced Palestinian family stand amid the rubble in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. AFP

"The situation is fast deteriorating into a catastrophe with potentially irreversible implications for the Palestinians as a whole and for peace and security in the region," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a forum in Qatar, a key intermediary.

Mediation efforts

Qatar's Prime Minister, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, told the forum that mediation efforts will continue to stop the war and have all hostages released, but "it always takes two parties to be willing to (undertake) such an engagement". "Unfortunately, we are not seeing the same willingness that we had seen in the weeks before," he added.

Israel's national security adviser, Tzachi Hanegbi, told Israel's Channel 12 TV that the U.S. has set no deadline for Israel to achieve its goals of dismantling Hamas and returning all the hostages.

"The evaluation that this can't be measured in weeks is correct, and I'm not sure it can be measured in months," he said.

With the war in its third month, the Palestinian death toll in Gaza has surpassed 17,700, the majority women and children, according to the Health Ministry in the Hamas-controlled territory. The ministry does not differentiate between civilian and combatant deaths.

Milei sworn in as Argentina braces for economic reforms

Agence France-Presse
BUENOS AIRES

Javier Milei was sworn in on Sunday as Argentina's President, as the country steels itself for harsh spending cuts and economic reforms aimed at curbing rampant inflation.

The 53-year-old libertarian economist has vowed there will be no "half-measures" as he tackles decades of overspending, debt and convoluted currency controls in Latin America's third-biggest economy.

"I swear to God and country... to carry out with loyalty and patriotism the position of President of the Argentine nation," he said as he took the oath of office.

Thousands lined the streets outside Congress, waving the country's flag and chanting Mr. Milei's rallying cry of "freedom!"

Fresh turn: Javier Milei, centre, and his Vice-President Victoria Villarruel, left, at his inauguration ceremony in Buenos Aires. AFP

Diverse set of leaders

The event brings together a diverse handful of world leaders, including Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Hungary's Viktor Orban – the only EU leader who has maintained close ties to Russia.

Mr. Milei will give his first speech as President from the steps of Congress. He will later swear in a cabinet of nine Ministers – a major slimdown from the current 18.

He has said his first set of measures will be presented to Congress in a matter of days.

Beijing, Manila trade blame for collision in disputed waters

Agence France-Presse
MANILA

A Philippine boat and a Chinese Coast Guard ship collided near a hotly contested reef on Sunday, with both countries trading blame for the latest such confrontation in the disputed South China Sea.

The incident happened during a Philippine resupply mission to a tiny garrison on Second Thomas Shoal in the Spratly Islands, which is a flashpoint for Manila and Beijing.

It comes a day after the Philippines accused the Chinese coast guard of using water cannons to "obstruct" three boats delivering provisions to Filipino fishermen near Scarborough Shoal.

Longstanding tension

Longstanding tensions between Manila and Beijing over the sea have flared in recent months. China claims almost the entire South China Sea, including waters and islands near the shores of its neighbours, and has ignored an international tribunal ruling that its assertions have no legal basis.

Bangladesh Opposition party holds protest as it is set to boycott elections

Press Trust of India
DHAKA

Hundreds of Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party supporters protested on Sunday to mark International Human Rights Day, as the country gears up for a general election on January 7 that the Opposition says should be held under a non-partisan, caretaker government.

The party, led by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, is boycotting the election, leaving the voters in the South Asian nation of 166 million with little choice but to re-elect Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League for a fourth consecutive term.

Stiff dissent: Supporters of the BNP gather near the Jatiya Press Club on International Human Rights Day on Sunday. AFP

At Sunday's protest in front of the National Press Club in downtown Dhaka, Opposition activists said they do not think a fair and free election can take place under Ms. Hasina's watch. The gathering took place weeks after a massive Opposition rally on October 28 turned violent.

Govt. crackdown

The party's decision to boycott the polls comes amid a monthslong crackdown that has seen hundreds of Opposition politicians jailed and critics silenced, an allegation authorities have denied.

Demonstrators on Sunday carried banners that read "Human chain of family members of the victims of murder and enforced disappearances" and "We want the unconditional release of all prisoners".

Sudan declares 15 diplomats of UAE *persona non grata*

Agence France-Presse
PORT SUDAN

Sudan's Foreign Ministry declared 15 UAE diplomats *persona non grata* on Sunday, demanding they leave Sudan "within 48 hours".

In recent weeks, pro-Army demonstrators and officials loyal to Army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan have accused the United Arab Emirates of supporting the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, led by Burhan's former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. The two forces have been at war since April 15, killing 12,000 people and displacing seven million.

Benefiting parties

World leaders including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres have said unnamed actors supplying "financial and weapons" support to both warring sides have contributed to the ongoing carnage.

While Egypt and Turkey have stood firmly in the army's corner, the UAE has been accused of funnelling arms and support to the RSF, which controls much of the country's lucrative gold mining sector.

Sport

Soloist should make amends in the R. Raghupathi Reddy Memorial Cup

HYDERABAD: The five-year-old mare Soloist, who ran second in her last start, should make amends in the R. Raghupathi Reddy Memorial Cup, the chief event of Monday's (Dec. 11) races.

1 TRIBUTE PLATE (Div. II) (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III) – 12. 50 p.m.: 1. Black Opal (1) A. Imran Khan 60, 2. Deccan Ranger (4) Mohit Singh 60, 3. Great Combo (9) R.S. Jodha 60, 4. Sea Of Class (3) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 60, 5. Urgent (6) Shivansh 60, 6. Siri (5) Md. Ismail 58, 7. Crown Witness (2) Santosh Raj 57, 8. Magic Princess (8) Likith Appu 56.5 and 9. Nishaan (7) N.B. Kuldeep 53.5.

1. BLACK OPAL, 2. URGENT, 3. SEA OF CLASS

2 BHAKRA NANGAL PLATE (Div. I) (1,400m) Maiden, 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 1. 20: 1. Great Giver (5) P. Ajeeth Kumar 61.5, 2. Windsor (7) Likith Appu 56.5, 3. Toffee (3) Md. Ekram Alam 55.5, 4. Five Star (6) B.R. Kumar 55, 5. N R I Skypower (1) Imran Chisty 55, 6. Antidote (8) Abhay Singh 53.5, 7. See My Attitude (9) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 53, 8. Pair Of Wings (4) Mohit Singh 52.5 and 9. Think Of God (2) Surya Prakash 51.5.

1. TOFFEE, 2. WINDSOR, 3. GREAT GIVER

3 NALGONDA CUP (Div. II) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 1.50: 1. D Yes Boss (1) P. Ajeeth Kumar 60, 2. Coming Home (7) Vivek G 59.5, 3. Indian King (3) Md. Ismail 59, 4. Salisbury (9) Md. Ekram Alam 58, 5. Angel Tesoro (6) B.R. Kumar 56, 6. Precious Gift (4) Santosh Raj 55, 7. Star Cruise (5) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 54.5, 8. Challenger (8) Abhay Singh 53.5 and 9. Char Ek Char (2) Surya Prakash 51.5.

1. PRECIOUS GIFT, 2. COMING HOME, 3. ANGEL TESORO

4 BHAKRA NANGAL PLATE (Div. II) (1,400m) Maiden, 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 2.25: 1. Flashing Memories (5) R.S. Jodha 60, 2. Bold Beauty (1) Ajay Kumar 59, 3. Caraxes (7) A. Imran Khan 59, 4. Bien Pensant (8) Surya Prakash 58, 5. Shubhrak (2) Mukesh Kumar 58, 6. Chica Bonita (3) Likith Appu 57, 7. Track Blazer (4) Deepak Singh 56.5, 8. Zidane (9) G. Naresh 55 and 9. Duck Hawk (6) Md. Ismail 53.5.

1. BOLD BEAUTY, 2. FLASHING MEMORIES, 3. CARAXES

5 NALGONDA CUP (Div. I) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 3.00: 1. Cabello (7) P. Sai Kumar 60, 2. Master Touch (5) A. Imran Khan 60, 3. Mireya (4) Vivek G 59.5, 4. Fatuma (2) G. Naresh 58, 5. Royal Star (----), 6. Golden Forza (8) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 55, 7. Indian Temple (1) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 54.5, 8. The Hambone (3) Likith Appu 54.5, 9. Exponent (9) Nakhat Singh 53.5 and 10. Muaser (6) P. Ajeeth Kumar 52.

1. FATUMA, 2. CABELLO, 3. MIREYA

6 ZURBARAN PLATE (1,400m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 3.35: 1. N R I Doublepower (9) Imran Chisty 60, 2. Hugh Capet (2) Vivek G 59, 3. Reigning Beauty (10) Md. Ekram Alam 57, 4. Anab E Shahi (4) Hindu Singh 56, 5. The Akhanda (1) Ashad Asbar 55, 6. Detective (5) Abhay Singh 54.5, 7. City Cruise (6) Nakhat Singh 52.5, 8. Clare (7) Likith Appu 52, 9. Exclusive Spark (8) Santosh Raj 51 and 10. Hard To Toss (3) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 50.5.

1. N R I DOUBLEPOWER, 2. REIGNING BEAUTY, 3. ANAB E SHAHI

7 R. RAGHUPATHI REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,400m), rated 80 and above (Cat. I) – 4.10: 1. Mysterious Angel (---), 2. Soloist (8) Shivansh 62.5, 3. Malaala (2) Ajay Kumar 61.5, 4. Ashwa Morocco (1) Likith Appu 61, 5. Candy Girl (4) P. Sai Kumar 60, 6. Akido (6) Md. Ekram Alam 59.5, 7. Yesterday (7) P. Ajeeth Kumar 53.5, 8. Icicle (3) Ashad Asbar 51 and 9. True Icon (5) Santosh Raj 50.

1. SOLOIST, 2. MALAALA, 3. ASHWA MOROCCO

8. TRIBUTE PLATE (Div. I) – 4.45: 1. Eminency (3) R.S. Jodha 60, 2. Ok Boss (2) N.B. Kuldeep 60, 3. Park Lane (8) Md. Ismail 60, 4. Riffa (7) G. Naresh 60, 5. Tortilla Chip (4) P. Sai Kumar 60, 6. MN's Council (9) Deepak Singh 59, 7. Inderdhanush (6) B.R. Kumar 58.5, 8. The Platinum Queen (1) Mukesh Kumar 57 and 9. Blue Brigade (5) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 52.

1. OK BOSS, 2. EMINENCY, 3. TORTILLA CHIP

Day's Best: **N R I DOUBLEPOWER**

Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Mini Jackpot: (i) 2, 3, 4 & 5. (ii) 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 3, 4 & 5, (iii) 6, 7 & 8.

Tanala: All races.

Champions Way claims the Golconda 2000 Guineas

HYDERABAD: Trainer Satish Narredu's colt Champions Way, piloted by Suraj Narredu, won the Golconda 2000 Guineas (Gr. 2), the stellar attraction of the Sunday's (Dec. 10) races.

The winner is owned by Mr. Teja Gollapudi & M/s. Blazing Saddles (PF).

Suraj, who confidently rode Champions Way, decided to dictate the terms over the mile trip, and made every post a winning one to win the second classic of the season with a comfortable margin.

1. ARDENT KNIGHT PLATE (DIV. II): HAPPY SOUL (Kuldeep Singh (Jr)) 1, Blazing Gun (Suraj Narredu) 2, Quality Warrior (S. Saqlain) 3 and Alpine Girl (Mohit Singh) 4. 1, 4-1/4 and Shd. 1m 25. 68s. ₹59 (w), 15, 11 and 10 (p). SHP: 44, THP: 31, SHW: 34 and 10, FP: 190, Q: 32, Tanala: 424. Favourite: Blazing Gun.

Owner: Mr. K.H. Vachha. Trainer: L.V. R. Deshmukh.

2. MEGATOP PLATE: EXOTIC DANCER (Shivansh) 1, Tripurari (Suraj Narredu) 2, Nightmare (Likith Appu) 3 and Top In Class (P. Sai Kumar) 4. Neck, 1-1/4 and 1-1/2. 1m 5. 59s. ₹29 (w), 15, 11 and 57, SHP: 38, THP: 163, SHW: 23 and 16, FP: 115, Q: 48, Tanala: 1,356. Favourite: Tripurari.

Owners: Mr. Donald Anthony Netto, Mr. Rahul Ashrit & Mr. Rohit Ashrit. Trainer: D. Netto.

Trainer S. Narredu, jockey Suraj Narredu and owner Teja Gollapudi whose Champions Way won the HRC The Golconda 2000 Guineas. G. RAMAKRISHNA

3. K.R. ARVIND REDDY MEMORIAL TROPHY: ITS ON (G. Naresh) 1, Kenna (Kuldeep Singh (Sr)) 2, Alexina (P. Sai Kumar) 3 and Verrocchio (Ajay Kumar) 4. 1/2, 1/2 and 2. 1m 11. 57s. ₹234 (w), 21, 15 and 11 (p). SHP: 49, THP: 29, SHW: 58 and 20, FP: 2,648. Q: 818, Tanala: 14,731. Favourite: Gretsy.

Owners: Mr. Rohit Gupta rep. Roli Stud Dairy & Agri Farm & Mr. Rajeev Sharma. Trainer: Magan Singh.

4. ARTILLERY CUP: ONLY THE BRAVE (A. Imran Khan) 1, Calista Girl (Ashad Asbar) 2, Dali's Destiny (Ajay Kumar) 3 and Subha (Mukesh Kumar) 4. 2-1/4, 1-1/2 and 1/2. 1m 6. 18s. ₹106 (w), 47, 17 and 17 (p). SHP: 33, THP: 48, SHW: 63 and 16, FP: 514, Q: 211, Tanala: 2,633. Favourite: Fly Me.

Owners: Mr. K.S.V. Prasad Raju & Mr. Nirvetla Sharath Reddy rep. Medico Healthcare Services & Technologies. Trainer: K.S.V. Prasad Raju.

5. DODLA PRATAP CHANDER REDDY MEMORIAL MILLION: LASHKA (Antony Raj S) 1, Star Of Night (P. Sai Kumar) 2, Flying Fury (Md. Ismail) 3 and Exclusive Black (Santosh Raj) 4. 5, Shd and 9-3/4. 1m 11. 91s. ₹14 (w), 10 and 17 (p). SHP: 23, THP: 61, SHW: 10 and 18, FP: 37, Q: 22, Tanala: 146. Favourite: Lashka.

Owners: Col. S.B. Nair & Mr. Aditya P. Thackersey. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

6. GOLCONDA 2000 GUINEAS (GR. 2): CHAMPIONS WAY (Sans Per Anum-Castle Queen) (Suraj Narredu) 1, Shadow Of The Moon (Sir Cecil-Avarua) (Mukesh Kumar) 2, Siddharth (Excellent Art-Lavender Brown) (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 3 and Huntingdon (Oiseau De Feu-Glorious Hymn) (S. Saqlain) 4. 2-1/4, 3 and Shd. 1m 36. 75s. ₹18 (w), 14, 17 and 10 (p): SHP: 62, THP: 39, SHW: 10 and 53, FP: 156, Q: 113, Tanala: 433. Favourite: Champions Way.

Owners: Mr. Teja Gollapudi & M/s. Blazing Saddles (PF). Trainer: S. Narredu.

7. ARDENT KNIGHT PLATE (DIV. I): BROOKLYN BEAUTY (Mohit Singh) 1, Carnival Lady (B.R. Kumar) 2, Cosmico (Surya Prakash) 3 and Rochelle (Santosh Raj) 4. Not run: Silver Act. ₹28 (w), 15, 17 and 25 (p). SHP: 52, THP: 145, SHW: 30 and 43, FP: 414, Q: 243, Tanala: 7,541. Favourite: Miracle Mary.

Owner: Mr. Md. Kashif Khan. Trainer: N. Rawal.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹98,280 (3 tkts.), 30%: 8,424 (15 tkts.).

Mini Jackpot: (i) 54,630 (c/o), (ii) 2,041 (52 tkts.).

Treble: (i) 14,176 (3 tkts.), (ii) 174 (298 tkts.).

PERSONAL REASONS

Deepak Chahar likely to miss T20Is against South Africa

PTI

Deepak Chahar is not in contention to be selected in the playing XI for the opening T20I between India and South Africa in Durban on Sunday as he is yet to join the squad due to personal reasons. "Deepak hasn't yet joined the team in Durban as a close family member needed urgent hospitalisation," a senior BCCI official said.

GEARED UP

The wicket of Alyssa Healy will give me joy, says Kashvee

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Pacer Kashvee Gautam says the wicket of Alyssa Healy will bring her most joy in the upcoming edition of the Women's Premier League. "It's a huge opportunity for me to showcase my skills. I think it will be exciting to bowl to Alyssa Healy or any other foreign batter like Hayley Matthews," said Kashvee.

HUGE CONCERN

'IPL's Impact player rule not encouraging all-rounders to bowl'

FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Wasim Jaffer feels that the IPL needs to take away the Impact Player rule. "I think IPL needs to take away the impact player rule, as it's not encouraging the all-rounders to bowl much and lack of ARs and batters not bowling is a major area of concern for Indian cricket. Thoughts? #IPL2024 #iplauction2024," Jaffer posted on *X*.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Maninder's Bengal Warriors downs Tamil Thalaivas

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Captain Maninder Singh dished out a 16-point effort as Bengal Warriors rallied to beat Tamil Thalaivas 48-38 in the Pro Kabaddi League in Bengaluru on Sunday. Haryana Steelers recorded a 35-33 win over Dabang Delhi K.C. in the second match. Siddharth Desai (10 points) shone for Steelers and Naveen Kumar (16) for Dabang.

First T20I between India and SA called off due to rain

INDIA IN SA

Press Trust of India
DURBAN

India's opening T20I against South Africa was abandoned without a ball being bowled after persistent rain here on Sunday.

First-time visitors to the Rainbow Nation like Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma and Arshdeep Singh, among others, would have been eager to get a taste of cricket here and would have to wait till Tuesday for the second match at St. George's Park at Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) for that.

From a leadership perspective, Suryakumar has done a very fine job while stepping in for the injured Hardik Pandya during the home T20I series against Australia. Suryakumar's side won that series 4-1.

The Durban T20I could also have handed India a chance to test its options for the sixth bowler slot, something that assumes importance as Hardik's fitness continues to be a talking point.

The Men in Blue could have tried the part-time spin of Tilak Varma, who recently bowled a few overs for Hyderabad in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, and Yashasvi Jaiswal.

Suryakumar did not provide a definite answer to the sixth bowling option question, saying the team had the bench-strength to fill that role.

Shreyanka and Saika spin a web around Knight's England

The two scalp three each to bundle out the visitors for 126; Smriti gets going, orchestrates the run chase

ENGLAND IN INDIA

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

The dust has settled down on the WPL auction, but women's cricket continues to fascinate this great metropolis. A big crowd turned up for the final T20I at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday.

It might have been a dead rubber, England having taken a 2-0 lead, but the Women in Blue gave their fans something to cheer about finally.

India chased down England's modest 126 with five wickets and an over to spare.

Finding her feet

India's reply was led by Smriti Mandhana (48, 48b, 5x4, 2x6), who at last found her form, after her twin failures in the series. Though she got out when just 15 was required, she had done enough.

After Shafali Verma fell early – she exposed her stumps and was castled by Freya Kemp – Smriti added 57 for the second wicket with Jemimah Rodrigues (29, 33b, 4x4) to put the innings back on the rails.

The England essay was all about an excellent bowling effort from India, backed by fine fielding, and an exceptional knock under pressure by captain Heather Knight (52, 42b, 3x4, 3x6).

But for the skipper, the visitors would have failed to use up the overs, just like India's did in Saturday's second T20I.

Queen of Swing

Renuka Singh, the Queen of Swing, broke through early yet again, as she knocked back Maia Bouchier's leg-stump off the third ball of the innings with a ball that moved in sharply. Not surprisingly, Renuka had a big smile after the conquest.

It soon turned out that most of the Indian bowlers would get plenty of chances to smile on this pleasant night.

Spinners Saika Ishaque and Shreyanka Patil, two of the finds of the WPL and who both made their debut in this series, picked up three wickets apiece in just their third match.

The duo, in fact, joined hands to end the promising knock of wicketkeeper Amy Jones (25, 21b, 3x4), Shreyanka catching the slog sweep at deep mid-wicket. At the non-striker's end was Knight, who stood tall among the ruins. She added 50 for the ninth wicket with Charlie Dean (16 not out, 15b, 1x4) to take England past 120, but the total wasn't enough to win the day.

Sunday show: Smriti and Shreyanka had a ball as the Women in Blue registered a consolation win in the third and final T20I. EMMANUAL YOGINI

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND

Sophia Dunkley c Shreyanka b Renuka 11 *(10b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Maia Bouchier b Renuka 0 *(1b)*, Alice Capsey c Jemimah b Saika 7 *(16b, 1x4)*, Heather Knight c sub (Minnu) b Amanjot 52 *(42b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Amy Jones c Shreyanka b Saika 25 *(21b, 3x4)*, Danielle Gibson b Saika 0 *(1b)*, Bess Heath c Amanjot b Shreyanka 1 *(5b)*, Freya Kemp lbw b Shreyanka 0 *(1b)*, Sophie Ecclestone b Shreyanka 2 *(7b)*, Charlie Dean (not out) 16 *(15b, 1x4)*, Mahika Gaur c Deepti b Amanjot 0 *(1b)*; Extras (w-12): 12; Total (in 20 overs): 126.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-1 (Bouchier, 0.3 overs), 2-24 (Dunkley, 2.6), 3-26 (Capsey, 5.1), 4-67 (Jones, 11.1), 5-67 (Gibson, 11.2), 6-70 (Heath, 12.3), 7-70 (Kemp, 12.4), 8-76 (Ecclestone, 14.3), 9-126 (Knight, 19.5).

INDIA BOWLING

Renuka 4-0-23-2, Titas 1-0-16-0, Amanjot 3-0-25-2, Saika 4-0-22-3, Deepti 4-0-21-0, Shreyanka 4-0-19-3.

INDIA

Smriti Mandhana c Dunkley b Ecclestone 48 *(48b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Shafali Verma b Kemp 6 *(6b, 1x4)*, Jemimah Rodrigues lbw b Dean 29 *(33b, 4x4)*, Deepti Sharma c Jones b Kemp 12 *(11b, 2x4)*, Harmanpreet Kaur (not out) 6 *(8b)*, Richa Ghosh b Ecclestone 2 *(4b)*, Amanjot Kaur (not out) 10 *(4b, 2x4)*.

Extras (lb-1, w-13): 14; Total (for five wkts. in 19 overs): 127.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-11 (Shafali, 2.1), 2-68 (Jemimah, 11.2), 3-94 (Deepti, 15.3), 4-112 (Smriti, 16.6), 5-116 (Richa, 18.1).

ENGLAND BOWLING

Dean 4-0-18-1, Mahika 3-0-17-0, Kemp 4-0-24-2, Ecclestone 4-0-40-2, Capsey 3-0-15-0, Gibson 1-0-12-0.

Toss: England.

PoM: Shreyanka.

PoS: Sciver-Brunt.

India won by five wickets with an over to spare, England clinched series 2-1.

Next match: One-off Test: December 14 to 17, DY Patil Stadium (Mumbai), 9.30 a.m.

Aston Villa beats Arsenal to close on Premier League lead

Winner: McGinn's seventh minute goal gave Villa its 15th consecutive home win. REUTERS

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies
BIRMINGHAM

John McGinn's goal helped Aston Villa beat title rivals Arsenal 1-0 on Saturday. Unai Emery's men have now won 15 consecutive Premier Leagues at Villa Park, which includes back-to-back victories over Manchester City and the Gunners. Tottenham won for the first time in six matches as Richarlison's double inspired a 4-1 rout of dismal Newcastle on Sunday. Bernardo Silva and Jack Grealish inspired Manchester City to return back to winning ways as the treble winners came back from a goal deficit to clinch a 2-1 victory over Luton Town.

The results: Premier League: Everton 2 (Doucoure 54, Dobbin 90) bt Chelsea 0; Fulham 5 (Jimenez 22, Willian 31, Adarabioyo 41, Wilson 60, Vinicius 89) bt West Ham 0; Luton 1 (Adebayo 45+2) lost to Manchester City 2 (Silva 62, Grealish 65); Tottenham 2 (Udogie 26, Richarlison 38 & 60, Son Heung-Min 85-pen) bt Newcastle 1 (Joelinton 90+1); **LaLiga:** Atletico 2 (Morata 17, Correa 22) bt Almeria 1 (Baptistão 62). **Serie A:** Frosinone 0 drew with Torino 0.

Bundesliga: Stuttgart 1 (Fuhrich 40) drew with Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Wirtz 47); Köln 0 drew with Mainz 05 0.

On Saturday: Premier League: Aston Villa 1 (McGinn 7) bt Arsenal 0; Monza 1 (Mota 83) bt Genoa 0.

LaLiga: Mallorca 1 (Larin 11) bt Sevilla 0; Villarreal 0 lost to Real Sociedad 3 (Merino 38, Zubimendi 41, Kubo 45+4); Alaves 0 lost to Las Palmas 1 (Rodriguez 31); Real Betis 1 (Ruibal 66) drew with Real Madrid 1 (Bellingham 53).

Serie A: Atalanta 3 (Lookman 38, 55, Muriel 90+5) bt AC Milan 2 (Giroud 45+3, Jovic 80); Inter 4 (Calhanoglu 37-pen, Dimarco 42, Thuram 44, Martinez 84) bt Udinese 0. **Bundesliga:** Borussia Dortmund 2 (Suele 45+6, Fullkrug 90+3) lost to RB Leipzig 3 (Bensebaini 32-og, Baumgartner 54, Poulsen 90+1).

Sicoma masters Minas in summit clash, retains World Championship crown

VOLLEYBALL

Netra. V
BENGALURU

Sir Sicoma Perugia of Italy produced a dominant display to defeat Brazil's Itambe Minas 25-13, 25-21, 25-19 and win the men's Volleyball Club World Championship title at the Koramangala Indoor Stadium here on Sunday.

Kamil Semeniuk began proceedings for Sicoma with an angular spike into Minas' empty space. With a series of serve errors, the Brazilian outfit kept losing points. Jesus Herrera Jaime's all-round display in attack and defence worked wonders for the defending champion. Minas lost the first set 13-25 despite Paulo Vinicios and Michael Sanchez's attempts to revive the side.

Minas' Gustavo Andre Orlando started the second set with a middle-court attack into Sicoma's vacant spot. Complacency seemed to grip the latter as it was sluggish in the initial part of the set before regrouping. Semeniuk's spike provided the Italian outfit the much-needed boost when it led 19-18. Minas gave up its significant lead, allowing Sicoma to power through 25-21.

Though it was a neck-and-neck affair in the opening period of the third set, Flavio Resende Gualberto's block for Sicoma – it was 12-9 at that stage – began the turnaround. With the Italian side's attackers and defenders combining well, Minas had no chance of overpowering its rival. A Jamie smash sealed the deal 25-19 for Sicoma, triggering celebrations in the camp.

Earlier in the day, Dmitriy Muserskiy's magic proved the difference as Suntory Sunbirds pipped Halkbank Spor Kulubu in a five-set thriller (17-25, 23-25, 25-21, 25-19, 15-12) to finish third.

The results:

Final: Sir Sicoma Perugia bt Itambe Minas 25-13, 25-21, 25-19; **Third place:** Suntory Sunbirds bt Halkbank Spor Kulubu 17-25, 23-25, 25-21, 25-19, 15-12.

Over the moon: The Sicoma players and support staff bask in the glory. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Rithvik, Maan and Sharmada rise to the occasion for Sapphires

TPL

Kamesh Srinivasan
NEW DELHI

Defending champion Gurgaon Sapphires did it yet again, beating Ichiban Samurai 81-56 in the final of the Pro Tennis League 2023 at the RK Khanna Stadium here on Sunday.

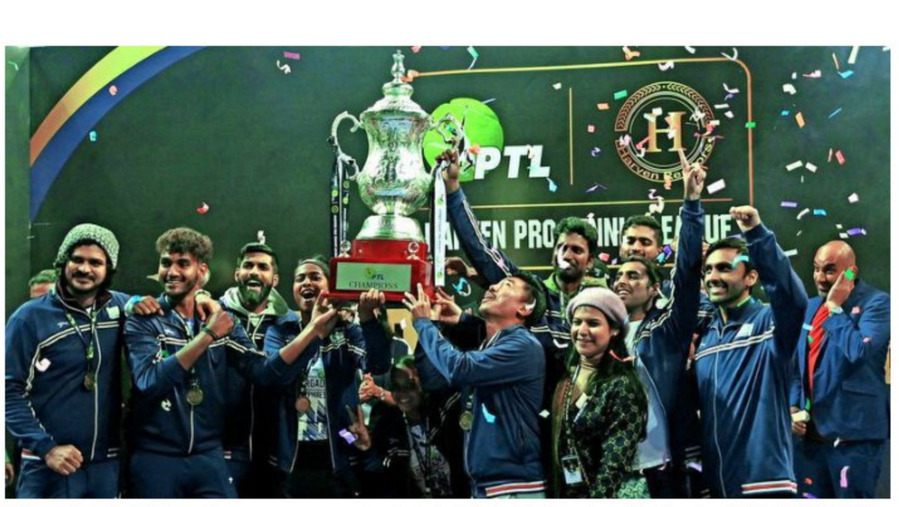
The entertaining final saw Sapphires get off to a tough start. However, the team battled back through Rithvik Bollipalli, Maan Kesharwani and Sharmada Balu to outscore a side that had won everything till the final.

Rithvik was a class act, serving big and stroking with confidence, as he tamed Nitin Kumar Sinha 18-12. It was a superb show by the doubles specialist. Sharmada and Ruma Gaikaiwari virtually sealed the tie by beating Sahaja Yamalapalli and Gauri Mangaonkar 15-5.

Leading 77-53 at that stage, Sapphires needed four more points to clinch the trophy. Fittingly, it was Rithvik (partnering Maan) who fired an ace on the first championship point (3-3) to close out the contest against Nitin Kumar Sinha and Rushil Khosla.

Rushil had done a good job till the final, but did not get much of a chance after losing to Maan Kesharwani 8-12 in the second singles.

The results: Final: Gurgaon Sapphires bt Ichiban Samurai 81-56 (Sharmada Balu lost to Sahaja Yamalapalli 6-14; Maan Kesharwani bt Rushil Khosla 11-9; Ruma Gaikaiwari bt Gauri Mangaonkar 15-5; Sharmada & Suresh Krishna bt Sahaja & Dilip Mohanty 12-8; Rithvik Bollipalli bt Nitin Kumar Sinha 18-12; Sharmada & Ruma bt Sahaja & Gauri 15-5; Rithivik & Maan bt Nitin & Rushil 4-3). **Semifinals:** Sapphires bt Sankara Stag Babolat Yoddhas 81-64 (Sharmada tied with Sowjanya Bavisetti 10-10; Maan tied Vansh Bisht 10-10; Ruma lost to Sahira Singh 8-12; Sharmada & Suresh Krishna bt Sowjanya & Pulkit Mishra 13-7; Rithvik bt Arjun Kadhe 20-10; Sharmada & Ruma lost to Sowjanya & Sahira 9-11; Rithvik & Maan bt Arjun & Vansh 11-4). **Samurai bt Paramount Proec Tigers 81-75** (Sahaja bt Sravya Shivani 13-7; Rushil tied with Parikshit Somani 10-10; Gauri lost to Divya Ungrish 7-13; Sahaja & Dilip lost to Sravya & Indra Kumar Mahajan 7-13; Nitin Kumar bt Vishnu Vardhan 16-14; Sahaja & Gauri bt Sravya & Divya 11-9; Nitin & Rushil bt Vishnu & Parikshit 17-9).



Champion stuff: Sapphires overcame a sluggish start to lay its hands on the trophy. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

INBRIEF

Debutant Forde's all-round show helps WI clinch series

A dream debut by Matthew Forde (three for 29) helped guide the West Indies to a series-clinching four-wicket win over England in final match of its One-Day International series at Kensington Oval in Barbados on Saturday.

The scores: England 206/9 off 40 overs (Ben Duckett 71, Liam Livingstone 45; Matthew Forde 3/29, Alzarri Joseph 3/61); (revised target 188 off 34 overs); lost to West Indies 191/6 off 31.4 overs (Keacy Carty 50, Alick Athanaze 45, Romario Shepherd 41 n.o.; Will Jacks 3/22) *(West Indies won three-match ODI series 2-1)*. **Toss**: West Indies. **Player-of-the-Match:** M. Forde: **Player-of-the-Series**: Shai Hope.

Uttar Pradesh in control against Karnataka

Uttar Pradesh took control of the proceedings at close of the third day in the four-day Cooch Behar Trophy under-19 match against Karnataka in Mysuru on Sunday. Having set a target of 183, UP reduced the host to 33 for five in 13 overs. Earlier, Uttar Pradesh scored 177 in 97.3 overs in its second innings.

The scores: Uttar Pradesh 239 in 77 overs & 177 in 97.3 overs (Kavya Teotia 48, Shubham Mishra 31, N. Samarth 4/22, Hardik Raj 3/37) vs Karnataka 234 in 78 overs & 33/5 in 13 overs (Shubham Mishra 4/9).

Munich attacker Gnabry sidelined by tendon injury

Bayern Munich attacker Serge Gnabry's season has been derailed by yet another injury, with the Bundesliga champion saying on Sunday that he picked up a tendon injury in the loss to Eintracht Frankfurt. "Gnabry suffered a muscle tendon injury in the left adductor area," Bayern said.

TRAU defeats Inter Kashi 3-0 for its first win of the season

TRAU FC defeated Inter Kashi 3-0 to earn its first win of the I-League season at Kalyani on Sunday. TRAU had suffered seven defeats and managed a solitary draw in its eight games before Sunday. Danish Aribam gave them the lead in the ninth minute, while Deepak Singh doubled the advantage in the 22nd. Abraham Okyere completed the tally in the 76th minute.

LIVE TELECAST

Vijay Hazare Trophy: Sports 18-1 Khel & Jio Cinema App, 9 a.m.

PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m. onwards

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 11 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

Ashwini-Tanisha duo claims women's doubles crown

The pair beats Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun and Yu Chien Hui to bag its third title in four finals

GUWAHATI MASTERS

K. Keerthivasan
GUWAHATI

In hardly 11 months of playing as a pair on the BWF tour, the Indian duo of Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto has made quite a rapid progress, reaching World No. 28. Now, it's the second-best Indian doubles combination after Gayatri Gopi Chand and Treesa Jolly (WR: 19) in the world rankings.

In the women's doubles summit clash of the Yonex-Sunrise Guwahati Masters Super 100 International badminton tournament here on Sunday, Ashwini-Tanisha produced a stellar performance to beat Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun and Yu Chien Hui 21-13, 21-19 to bag its third title in four finals.

All smiles: Ashwini-Tanisha pair dominated proceedings throughout the summit clash. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Below par

The Taipei pair was below par in all ways. Sung and Yu neither had the weapons nor the nous required to match wits against the crack combination of Ashwini and Tanisha.

If not for a few unforced errors from the Indians in the second game, the contest would have gotten over much earlier than the 40 minutes it took.

Tanisha at the net was quick to pounce if the shuttle was within the range to go for a 'kill' and her retrievals were top-notch. Ashwini was solid and steady at the back.

"We are working on a lot of things. The important thing is to have an all-round game and not have a single-minded game. We are more open to all aspects. That will be crucial for us. In this tournament, that worked very well. The variations in our shots, the variations from attack to defence worked well," Ashwini said to *The Hindu*.

"I am not surprised (with our progress). The whole goal was to do well. We are on the right track and are looking to do better."

The results (finals): Men: Singles: Yohanes Saut Marcellyno (Ina) bt Alvi Wijaya Chairullah (Ina) 21-12, 21-17. **Doubles:** Choong Hon Jian & Haikal Muhammad (Mas) bt Lin Bing-Wei & Su Ching Heng (Tpe) 21-17, 23-21. **Women: Singles:** Lalinrat Chaiwan (Tha) bt Line Christophersen (Den) 21-14, 17-21, 21-16. **Doubles:** Ashwini Ponnappa & Tanisha Crasto bt Sung Shuo Yun & Yu Chien Hui (Tpe) 21-13, 21-19. **Mixed doubles:** Hee Yong Kai Terry & Tan Wei Han Jessica (Sin) bt Mads Vestergaard (Den) 21-29, 21-11.

India beats USA, finishes ninth

WOMEN'S JR. WC

Press Trust of India
SANTIAGO

Goalkeeper Madhuri Kindo shone under the bar as India displayed remarkable resilience to eke out a 3-2 win over USA in sudden death to finish ninth at the junior women's hockey World Cup here.

Both India and USA displayed tremendous grit as the match ended at 2-2 in regulation time. Kindo then produced an amazing save in sudden death while Rutaja Dadaso Pisal calmly converted her shot to lead India to victory.

During the allocated 60 minutes, India's Manju Chorsiya (11th minute) and Sunelita Toppo (57th) scored a goal each, while Kiersten Thomassey (27th and 53rd) were on target for USA.

The tense penalty shoot-out witnessed Mumtaz Khan and Rutaja successfully convert their chances, while the latter also scored in sudden death to secure victory for India. On the opposing side, Katie Dixon and Olivia Bent-Cole managed to score for USA in the shoot-out.

Pakistan wins big against India

U-19 ASIA CUP

ANI
DUBAI

Mohammad Zeeshan's four-for and Azan Awais's unbeaten century were the highlights of Pakistan's eight-wicket win over India in the Under-19 Asia Cup on Sunday.

India opener Adarsh Singh (62, 81b, 4x4, 1x6) and skipper Uday Saharan (60, 98b, 5x4) were involved in a 93-run stand for the third wicket after the team lost Arshin Kulkarni and Rudra Patel early. Sachin Dhas (58, 42b, 2x4, 3x6) boosted the total with a flurry of shots late in the innings before Zeeshan's spell (10-1-46-4) restricted India to 259 for nine.

The scores: India 259/9 in 50 overs (Adarsh Singh 62, Uday Saharan 60, Sachin Dhas 58, Mohammad Zeeshan 4/46) lost to Pakistan 263/2 in 47 overs (Shahzaib Khan 63, Azan Awais 105 n.o., Saad Baig 68 n.o.).

TN, Mumbai batters seek elusive form in 'clash between legacies'

HAZARE TROPHY

Dhruva Prasad
RAJKOT

At 38, Dinesh Karthik is still leading Tamil Nadu's quest for another white-ball title, and he will be without the services of Sai Sudharsan and Pradosh Ranjan Paul, who are touring South Africa, when his side takes on 41-time Ranji Trophy champion Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy (VHT) quarterfinal at the Sanosara Cricket Ground-B here on Monday.

Tamil Nadu last lifted the VHT title in 2016-17 on the back of Karthik's century in the final and he finds himself playing a lone hand again, being the only batter from his side to aggregate more than 200 runs in the tournament. That he will be without TN's only centurion in the competition, Sudharsan, and the calm head of Paul will add to his task given the top-order's poor returns.

"We will really miss them, but we do have a good side and we will try and do our best," Karthik said after an optional training session on Sunday at the Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium, about 30 kilometres from the match venue.

Karthik's counterpart Ajinkya Rahane won't have it any easier, with Mumbai's batting failing to chase 289 and 200 against Tripura and Odisha, respectively, in its last two league games.

Mainstay: Skipper Karthik would have to do the heavy-lifting in the absence of key players for his side. VIJAY SONEJI

While Mumbai will be without Shardul Thakur and Sarfaraz Khan, away on India's tour to South Africa, the return of all-rounder Shivam Dube from national duty will come as a relief.

Seeing his junior team members depart on a tour he was an integral part of when the national team last visited the Proteas, Rahane will know he will have to do better than the 157 runs in seven matches that he has managed so far to be in the reckoning again.

The 27-year-old Jay Bista has stood head and shoulders above the rest of Mumbai's batters, scoring 281 runs at an average in excess of 46.

TN and Mumbai's bowlers have bailed their batters out in the group stage. While Karthik's quartet of Sandeep Warrier, T. Natarajan, R. Sai Kishore and Varun Chakravarthy has fired in unison to help the side defend two sub-200 totals against Baroda and Madhya Pradesh, Mumbai's pace duo comprising Mohit Avasthi and Tushar Deshpande, and spinner Shams Mulani have ensured batters don't have to chase too many.

However, come the quarterfinal in the city where TN thrashed Mumbai in the VHT quarterfinal in 2009-10, albeit at a different venue, and where runs have been in abundance, the batters will hope to turn their fortunes around in what is being touted as 'a contest between red-ball and white-ball legacy'.

In the other quarterfinal matches, Haryana takes on Bengal, Rajasthan meets Kerala and Vidarbha locks horns with Karnataka.

Malkeet edges Pandurangaiah in a tense summit clash

Triumphant: Malkeet Singh and Amee Kamani in action on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

CUE SPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Malkeet Singh emerged as the new National 6-Red snooker men's champion after beating his RSPB colleague E. Pandurangaiah 7-5 in a closely fought final in the 90th National Billiards & Snooker Championships at the Nehru Indoor Stadium on Saturday.

Malkeet earlier had a morale-boosting come-from-behind 6-5 victory over favourite and 26-time IBSF world champion Pankaj Advani (PSPB) in the last-four stage.

It was former champion Advani's upset, after having all but sealed the match at 5-3, that left the Indian cue sports community stunned. Malkeet won the final three frames 59-0, 43-1, 67-13 in spectacular fashion against Advani.

On Sunday, Amee Kamani of Madhya Pradesh regained the women's crown in style, brushing aside the challenge of Anupama Ramachandran of Tamil Nadu 4-1 in the final.

The results: Men: Final: Malkeet Singh (RSPB) bt E. Pandurangaiah (RSPB) 7-5 (0-58, 51-16, 43-1, 7-57, 50-23, 69-0, 0-48, 0-60, 49-0, 43-6, 22-42, 33-16). **Semifinals:** Malkeet bt Pankaj Advani (PSPB) 6-5 (46-13, 24-36, 20-40, 39-28, 10-45, 32-42, 41-28, 6-47, 59-0, 43-1, 67-13); Pandurangaiah bt Aditya Mehta (PSPB) 6-4 (23-39, 44-22, 10-41, 44-28, 21-30, 36-14, 42-24, 17-46, 54-5, 40-23). **Women: Final:** Amee Kamani (MP) bt Anupama Ramachandran (TN) 4-1 (40-20, 47-10, 11-42, 43-0, 48-26). **Semifinals:** Amee bt M. Chitra (Kar) 4-2 (28-31, 29-21, 45-18, 13-34, 56-0, 49-0); Anupama bt Vidya Pillai (Kar) 4-2 (1-51, 47-8, 41-0, 25-56, 37-9, 34-0). **Quarterfinals:** Amee bt Neena Praveen (TN) 4-0; Chitra bt Arantxa Sanchis (Mah) 4-2, Vidya bt Keerthana Pandian (Kar) 4-3, Anupama bt R. Umadevi (Kar) 4-0.

Tamil Nadu men shade Railways in the final

NATIONAL BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Tamil Nadu beat Railways 72-67 in the final while Railways women retained their title outplaying Kerala 80-50 in the 73rd National basketball championship at the Guru Nanak Dev Indoor Stadium, Ludhiana, on Sunday.

Tamil Nadu got off to a strong start and led 42-25 at half time. There was a better fight from Railways in the third quarter, but Tamil Nadu was able to assert itself and stay ahead, especially in the last quarter when Railways could score only seven points.

Baladhaneswar top scored for the Tamil Nadu team with 17 points. He had good support from Pranav Prince, Jeevanathan and Aravind Kumar. Palpreet Singh top scored for Railways with 23 points.

Railways women were once again well served by the towering Poonam Chaturvedi as she top scored with 23 points. Pushpa Senthilkumar, Gulabsha Ali and Sruthi Aravind also played their part well for the champion team.

Champion: The Tamil Nadu men pose with their winnings.

The men's and women's champion teams were presented Rs. 5,00,000 each. The runners-up and the third placed teams were given Rs. 3,00,000 and Rs. 2,00,000 respectively.

Baladhaneswar and Poonam were adjudged the 'most valuable players' of the men's and women's sections respectively. They would get a car each.

The results: Men: Final: Tamil Nadu 72 (Baladhaneswar 17, Pranav Prince 11, Jeevanathan 11, Aravind Kumar 10) bt Railways 67 (Palpreet Singh 23, Sahil Kalyan 13, Manik 13). **Third place:** Punjab 71 (Nawaz Singh 19, Kanwar Gurbaj Singh 18) bt Delhi 65 (Vishesh Bhriguvanshi 19, Vishal Kumar Gupta 15, Shubham Tomar 11, Joginder Singh 10). **Women: Final:** Railways 80 (Poonam Chaturvedi 23, Pushpa Senthilkumar 15, Gulabsha Ali 11, Sruthi Aravind 10) bt Kerala 50 (Aneesha Cleetus 15, Susan Dloranteena 10, Sreekala 10). **Third place:** Tamil Nadu 65 (K Sathya 21, Dofhana 12, Harima Sundari 10) bt Karnataka 54 (Varsha Nandini 22).

Chouhan secures 11th career title

GOLF

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

Om Prakash Chouhan birdied the final hole to total six-under 282 and secure a one-stroke win for his 11th career title at the S.S.P. Chawrasia Invitational event at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club in Kolkata on Sunday.

Overnight leader Chouhan, who began his final round by gaining a shot, overcame a rough patch – which included four bogeys over the next 13 holes as he struggled with his putting and lost his lead briefly – to hit an accurate approach shot very close to the 18th hole and effortlessly putted it to pump his fist out of joy.

His one-over 73 was good enough to bring him his fourth trophy of the season. The 37-year-old bagged ₹15 lakh to bolster his position atop the Order of Merit .

He became the first player to cross the ₹1 crore barrier in season's earnings on the Professional Golf Tour of India. "Having closed out a few matches earlier in the year, I had the confidence that I can do it again," said Chouhan.

Chouhan. FILE PHOTO

The scores: 282: Om Prakash Chouhan (70, 69, 70, 73); **283:** Varun Chopra (73,72, 69, 69); **284:** Angad Cheema (75, 67, 72, 70); **286:** Udayan Mane (73, 68, 73, 72) and Rashid Khan (75,70, 69,72).